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THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON will probably not be led by Smedley Butler or by any of the gentlemen publicly mentioned in connection with the fascist plot which flared and died in last week's news. But General Butler's assertion that he has had forty-two offers to head a fascist coup is not as funny as it sounds. Nor is it accidental that the air is filled with rumors of such coups. The basic maladjustments from which fascism arises are growing sharper as the months go by. "Business sentiment" is reported to be optimistic. But unemployment is not decreasing and real wages are falling. In 104 industries employing nearly two-thirds of all industrial workers, the average weekly income in September, 1934—$19.05—adjusted for changes in the cost of living was lower than in March, 1933. The disastrous effect on the general wage scale of Harry Hopkins's order wiping out even the miserable minimum of thirty cents an hour for relief work can be realized only when it is borne in mind that in large sections of industry the minimum has tended to become the maximum wage. And the suggestion of Secretary Ickes about lower wages in the construction field is likely to endure much longer than the vast housing program of which it was a part. Meanwhile the Administration's schemes for large spending continue to run into the stone walls of an economic system which operates on the rigid principle that money should not be spent when times are bad. Mr. Butler's specter of a fascist dictatorship set up to protect a few Wall Street millionaires from inflation is the fantastic reflection of a genuine danger which is rising steadily above the horizon. In Washington there is a growing pressure to subordinate everything, including the rights of labor, to a desperate drive for recovery at any cost. At the same time the Administration, through Section 7-a, has encouraged a counter-pressure which it will find difficult to restrain at will. In that unsensational conflict lie the elements and the dangers of fascism.

AFTER TWO HOURS of deliberation, the Insull jury returned a verdict of not guilty to Mr. Insull and his sixteen co-defendants on charges of using the mails to defraud. The old adage that time is the best witness for the defense held good here as in other cases. Mr. Insull had money enough to keep himself out of court for two years, while the persons who had suffered at his hands had time to forget the sharpness of their losses. Likewise, in a trial that went on for eight weeks, the witnesses who in the beginning brought tears to the eyes of the jury by telling how they had put their life savings in stock that turned out to be worthless could be replaced by a succession of eminent persons, including a bishop, an archbishop, and a cardinal of the Catholic church, who came on the witness stand and told what high-principled and well-intentioned men Mr. Insull and his associates were. Add to this the task of evaluating two tons of evidence and the problem of explaining to a jury the complicated methods of accounting that were involved, and the difficulty of obtaining a conviction becomes all too clear. Other charges of embezzlement and fraud now face the Insulls, and their trials are scheduled to begin shortly. Meanwhile they are being showered with telegrams of congratulation on their acquittal. All of which not only suggests that the public positively enjoys being mulcted but illustrates once more the difficulty of sending a rich man to jail, no matter how flagrant his crime.

AMBASSADOR SAITO'S announcement that Japan will denounce the Washington Naval Treaty comes as a surprise to no one. Even before the recent conversations were started in London, it was generally recognized that the positions of Japan and the United States were irreconcilable. Since then the Japanese have made it abundantly clear that they will be satisfied with nothing short of supremacy in the Pacific, a demand that the United States quite properly has been unwilling to grant in principle or in fact. And as if to prevent the Japanese position from being misconstrued, the Diet approved on November 23 a record appropriation for the army and navy of over a billion yen, or 46 per cent of the annual budget. Under the circumstances we may expect increased activity on the part of Bethlehem Steel and the shipping lobby to induce the United States to rush its naval program in order to maintain our supremacy over Japan. Fortunately, however, there is an alternative which

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is more consistent with the Administration's general program. In view of Japan's lack of essential raw materials, it might be desirable for the United States to join with the other naval Powers in enforcing a strict embargo on scrap iron and other products which might be used for military purposes, destined for Japan or any other nation refusing to adopt the restrictions imposed by international action. Such a provision might well be incorporated in the draft treaty for armament control which the United States recently submitted to the Disarmament Conference.

THE ILL-TIMED REMARKS of M. Archimbaud regarding Soviet military aid to France in the event of war may go down as one of the classic *faux pas* of all history. His statement fell as a bombshell at the very moment when the French government was engaged in the delicate task of wooing Poland to an acceptance of an Eastern Locarno. The fact that no military alliance actually exists between France and the Soviet Union will not completely allay the suspicion and animosity which have already been aroused. Should this feeling prevent the completion of the prospective non-aggression pact, it is likely that we shall indeed witness the sort of Franco-Russian relationship envisioned by M. Archimbaud. This will not take the form of a military alliance of the pre-war type but will be developed within the framework of the post-war peace machinery. It is probable, for example, that the Soviet Union will adhere to the original Locarno agreement, guaranteeing the status quo in the West, in exchange for a promise on the part of France to aid in the preservation of peace in Eastern Europe. Such an agreement would differ fundamentally from the old-fashioned military alliance in that action would be dependent on the naming of the aggressor by the neutral members of the League Council. Even this arrangement unquestionably has its dangers, but if the Eastern Locarno fails it may be the one hope of averting a conflict which would engulf the whole of Europe.

ALL HOPE that an equitable solution of the Indian problem might be reached by the present Parliament has been shattered by the publication of the report of the parliamentary joint committee which has been studying the question for the past year. The report is even more reactionary than the notorious White Paper issued a year ago at the conclusion of the round-table conferences. It retains or strengthens all the important "safeguards," and goes beyond the White Paper in substituting indirect election for the central legislature by the provincial legislatures for direct election by the voters. The provincial legislatures will be chosen directly, but the right of suffrage is limited by property qualifications to 14 per cent of the adult population, and representation is heavily weighted in favor of the British and non-Hindus. The report might be described as an attempt to strengthen British control in India through minor concessions to the Indian bourgeoisie rather than a step toward actual self-government. The British have not yielded on a single point which might be expected to endanger even remotely their rule in India. Control of the army and police remains in the hands of the British, though they will be paid for by the Indians. The conduct of foreign affairs, carrying with it responsibility for making war, is likewise retained by the Crown officials, as is control over currency and finance. In addition, the Governor-General has wide discretionary powers which would make him a virtual dictator in time of crisis. The program is a far cry from the dominion status discussed at the first and second round-table conferences, and is bitterly resented by all shades of Indian opinion with the exception of the princes and some of the more conservative Moslem leaders. Its only merit is that even the mild concessions which it offers are vigorously opposed by the diehard Tories led by Winston Churchill. If this faction can delay acceptance of the plan until Labor returns to power, it will have rendered India a real service.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT has again declared himself unequivocally in favor of ratification of the child-labor amendment to the Constitution. In a letter made public by the National Child Labor Committee on November 19, he declared: "It is my desire that the advances attained through the NRA be made permanent. In the child-labor field the obvious method of maintaining the present gains is through ratification of the child-labor amendment. I hope this may be achieved." This is admirably frank and clear, and backed by Mr. Roosevelt's enormous prestige it should do much to press the amendment through the necessary sixteen of twenty-four State legislatures which are to consider it this winter. Several of these have already refused to ratify the amendment, but with the Democratic Party and its leader so triumphantly in the ascendant, it is altogether likely that favorable action will now be taken. It has often been charged that whereas expressions of opinion in opposition to passage of the amendment were featured in the daily press, favorable comments were buried. In this connection it is interesting to note that although the news release of November 19 included a positive statement by Mr. Roosevelt which might ordinarily have been expected to appear on page 1, the New York *Herald Tribune* carried the story on page 7, while the New York *Times* published it on page 26 alongside its announcement of "Business Records" and "Arrival of Buyers." Even the most popular President since George Washington cannot make the child-labor amendment news—when he is for it.

SECRETARY ICKES'S HOUSING PROGRAM and its reception offer almost a classic demonstration of the dilemma faced by the Administration in its attempt to bring back prosperity by priming private industry through huge public expenditures. Mr. Ickes proposed to release $2,000,000,000 of government money at the low rate of 3 per cent to build houses to rent at $5 per room. Since industrial workers on the average receive a weekly income of little more than $20 a week, the need for decent apartments and houses at $5 a room is indisputable. It is hardly less indisputable that the only great need in housing is for cheap housing. Now enters the real-estate industry—which is one of the industries the Administration wants to save—in the person of Joseph P. Day of New York City, one of the most important real-estate men in the country. In the first place, says Mr. Day, "there is nothing in the Constitution authorizing federal interest in the housing question." In the second place, Mr. Ickes's proposal would stop recovery in the private-building field and even depress it farther because no private builder can build a house to rent at $5 a room (he is speaking of New York City), and if the government does it,

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people will get the outrageous idea that it is possible. Mr. Day's third point was that $5 rooms could not pay even 3 per cent interest, let alone amortize the debt, and that the government had no right to take money from the public and "lock it up" in this way. Finally he characterized the whole thing as a grim joke. It will be an even grimmer joke if the dog in the housing manger succeeds in stopping the government's program. The joke in that case will be on the poor devil making $20 a week who presumes to think that he and his family can expect to live in anything better than a cold-water tenement.

THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMICS of the Canadian Medical Association has recommended a plan which borders closely upon socialized medicine but which has every chance of being approved and inaugurated. Aside from the merit of its social implications it provides striking contrast to the do-nothing, back-biting, reactionary policies of the American Medical Association. The Canadian plan is simplicity itself. It is to be administered by the provincial department of health from a fund to be contributed to by the insured, their employers, and the state. All persons with dependents and with an income of less than $2,500, and all without dependents and earning less than $1,000, will be assessed a small sum weekly. In return they and their dependents alike will receive all necessary medical treatment free. The state will pay the assessments for the indigent, while people in the higher income brackets are to be insured on a voluntary basis. The physicians will be paid either a fixed salary, an agreed scale of fees per case, or a sum based on the number of insured persons in their districts. Mr. Roosevelt might do well to look over the details of this plan when he is drafting his own legislative program.

AS WE WRITE, William H. O'Donnell, whose duty as a New Jersey state trooper once was to help break strikes, and whose labor leadership in the Seabrook Farms strike landed him in jail, has ended his thirteenth day of a hunger strike in protest against his imprisonment. His action is more than a gesture. O'Donnell was given a six months' jail term for alleged disorderly conduct and "uttering loud and offensive language" in the organization of the Seabrook strike last spring, when hired gunmen precipitated bloody riots. His own explanation is that he was framed, mainly because he called Prosecutor Thomas Tuso a "rat." He is not a Communist, as other strike leaders were; on the contrary, he served eleven years in the United States army and has also been a Canal Zone policeman and a New Jersey trooper. His imprisonment and hunger strike have united labor and radical forces in South Jersey as never before. The Socialist Party and the International Labor Defense, aided by many unions, are circulating united-front petitions for his release. The Governor has now ordered the forced feeding of the prisoner, a procedure which the warden of the jail, on advice of the county physician, has ruled out as "difficult and dangerous." Meanwhile O'Donnell, whose heart would not be equal to any prolonged fast, grows weaker. In the circumstances the least Governor Moore can do is to order an immediate investigation of the vicious set-up in Cumberland County, where law enforcement has been turned over to a landowner-farmer clique which has stopped at nothing in its fight against unionism.

Emptier than Space

LAST winter Sir James Jeans delivered the annual Royal Institution Lectures, which are intended, in part at least, for children. His discourses have just been published by Macmillan under the title "Through Space and Time," and they will be reviewed in our book department by a distinguished astronomer. Meanwhile, however, we cannot help wondering what his juvenile audience thought when it heard him declare:

> We now think that space is curved, and round, and finite in amount—rather like the surface of a balloon. Space is not to be compared to the air inside the balloon, but to the rubber which forms its surface. Thus we can travel on and on in space, just as a fly could walk on forever round the surface of this balloon. . . . Not only is space almost inconceivably large, but it is continually becoming larger. It doubles its linear dimensions every 1,300 million years or so, so that there is already eight times as much space as when the earliest radio-active rocks solidified, and perhaps more than a hundred times as much as when the earth was torn out of the sun.

Why some pestiferous child did not ask what the space-balloon was surrounded by or what the body of the ideological fly crawling upon its surface projected into, we shall never know. We do know, however, that when adults ask similar questions they are generally told either that the questions are meaningless or, more honestly perhaps, that the scientist does not know any better than does the questioner; that these analogies are as incomprehensibly paradoxical to the specialist as they are to the layman. Your mathematician understands his formulas and why the only interpretation of observed phenomena which seems compatible with them implies a finite instead of an infinite space. But he is very nearly helpless when it comes to translating his conclusions into a picture, and perhaps it would be just as well if he gave up the attempt to do so. The space beyond space, or, if you prefer, the emptiness which is so empty that there is not even any space in it, is something about which only those whose mathematics have forced them to it need think. Nor does it help much to whisper—as has been done—that there may be many finite spaces completely discontinuous with one another—even, perhaps, an infinite number of them.

The Greeks were satisfied with the idea that the world was supported upon the shoulders of Atlas. Subtler Orientals also placed it upon the back of a giant, but explained that he stood on a tiger, which stood on a turtle. Presumably the questioner was supposed to get tired of the game by this time and never bother to ask what the turtle stood on. We have grown more persistent, but we do not seem to be getting much closer to an ultimate answer. And to any astronomers who are pestered with too many questions about the space which holds space we suggest the technique employed by the father in a sketch by Ring Lardner which describes the troubles of a gentleman who has unwisely offered to help his son with arithmetic. The questions soon carry him out of his depth, and when the final poser is put, Mr. Lardner records the response of the father in a really deathless phrase:

"'Shut up,' he explained."

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Labor Is Asked to Surrender

WE are able to give our readers details of the terms offered to the American Federation of Labor by Myron C. Taylor, Chairman of the Board of the United States Steel Corporation, on behalf of the entire steel industry. The company was prepared to agree:

> To recognize representatives of any organization of employees as such, irrespective of numbers, and to negotiate with them on wages, discharges, and other matters.
>
> To appear before the Steel Board and furnish the fullest evidence, but not to waive its "rights" in any way.

In return the company asked a general truce for the duration of the National Industrial Recovery Act. This was the third offer made by the steel trust to labor, and like its predecessors it was rejected. But it was considered generous enough for the President, Miss Perkins, and the Steel Board to urge its acceptance on the A. F. of L. William F. Green, who conducted the negotiations, in rejecting the offer put forward a counter-proposal. This simply required of the steel trust the acceptance of the present legal status of collective bargaining—namely, the right of elections, majority rule, and wage agreements. It insisted on the company accepting the rulings of the Steel Board, and it declined to enter into a truce which would suspend the right to strike.

These negotiations go to the root of the complex problems which the New Deal is supposed to solve, indeed of the effort to create some balance of power between concentrated wealth and the common man in American life. It must be borne in mind that the right of collective bargaining is one of the foundations of the New Deal. It was made law in Section 7-a of the Recovery Act. The right to elections became law in Joint Resolution No. 44. The right to strike has long been recognized in American law. The principle of majority rule was clearly defined in the Houde case; the company defied the ruling, and now is being prosecuted for violating the law.

The law, then, is clear. Yet the steel trust offers an agreement in which it undertakes to abide by only part of it—and a small part at that—and asks labor in return to renounce its claim to the rest of it for an indeterminate period. This offer is not surprising; what is perplexing is that it should so appeal to the President, Miss Perkins, and the Steel Board that they should press organized labor to accept it. The explanation can only be that the Administration believes more can be gained by compromising with the powerful steel trust than by openly taking issue with it. Such thinking may not be without persuasive reason to a man of the President's temperament. He is determined to bring about recovery. He sees before him the ultimate choice between winning the cooperation of big business and the uncharted experiment of putting the unemployed to work through government initiative. It must be that for the moment the shadow of this choice has fallen on the otherwise clear principles already laid down defining the rights of labor.

The steel plan introduces no balance of power in the steel industry. The company merely makes a genuflexion to existing law, and asks organized labor to validate its insincerity by becoming partner in the ceremony. If the truce were to endure only to the middle of June, when the act expires, it would be something less of an affront. But even this is not clear. Parts of the act may be prolonged indefinitely; the truce might become indeterminate. But even for the briefer period there is no basis in the plan for a truce. A real truce would be one based on collective bargaining in its fullest legal sense, in other words, an agreement establishing hours, wages, and freedom from discrimination in hiring and firing for a specified period during which labor would agree in the interests of recovery to make no new demands. This is the counter-proposal we should like the American Federation of Labor to have made or still to make.

We should be inclined to censure the Administration even more severely for approving the steel offer but for one saving consideration. This centers around the National Labor Relations Board, and the suddenly awakened liveliness in the Department of Justice in pressing the Houde case. The Labor Board under Lloyd Garrison rang out as a clear bell over the din and confusion of the labor policy of the Administration in the winter and spring. Under Mr. Garrison's successor, Francis Biddle, the same incisive, straightforward policy is being pursued. The board owes some of its prestige to its members, particularly its two chairmen. But much derives from the fact that it is independent not only in its judgments but in its status. It stands outside the departments, whose breath of life is negotiation and the necessary practice of give and take. It maintains the voice of law, and the very spirit that law cannot be the subject matter for compromise. Its efforts have been nullified both by the inevitable refusal of anti-union employers to accept its rulings without a court test and by the shocking procrastination of the Department of Justice in instituting actions. This situation appears to have changed even in the few days since Mr. Biddle's appointment. The speed with which the Department of Justice is now moving in the Houde case reveals that the Administration is pressing for a prompt clarification of the issue of constitutionality, and that, despite its approval of the steel offer, it is apparently ready to insist upon the enforcement of genuine collective bargaining.

But before the courts can rule on constitutionality, and before the machinery of enforcement can be automatic, many months must pass, perhaps a year. In this interim the labor unions must be encouraged not to yield an inch of the legal ground which has been won. They have Section 7-a, they have Joint Resolution No. 44, they have the right to strike, they have the Houde decision. They will be well advised to concentrate their forces and their efforts on resisting any pressure to whittle away their legal rights for any period whatever. The Administration can be excused, perhaps, for being preoccupied with the urgency of recovery. But it cannot be commended for buying its chances of recovery at such a price. And if it is necessary to find a political reason against its course, we point out that the Democratic Party carried Pennsylvania not only because of the President's personal popularity, but because of the concerted action of the workers in throwing out the local authorities who had thwarted them in their efforts to organize.

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Revolution on the March

WITH the capture of Juichin, capital of the central Soviet areas in Kiangsi province, which has been held by the Communists since 1928, Chiang Kai-shek's sixth annual campaign for the extermination of the "Communist bandits" has apparently ended in complete triumph. Although reports from the battle-front have been contradictory and lacking in detail, there appears to be little doubt that Nanking's claims are substantially correct—so far as they go. The "go-slow" tactics which General von Seeckt, noted German military leader and adviser to Chiang, imported from Africa, involving the gradual consolidation of recaptured territory by road building and by the construction of blockhouses at strategic points, appear to have been an important factor in the victory. The blockade which had been organized against the Soviet territories also undoubtedly had its effect. But the decisive factor, according to neutral observers, was the efficient use of several hundred airplane bombers, purchased chiefly from the United States and operated, in some instances at least, by American fliers. Although the Red army succeeded in capturing a number of these planes, it was prevented by lack of gasoline from operating them as defense against Nanking's aerial attack.

While it is unlikely that the victorious troops will be able to reimpose the old system of landlord-usurer exploitation in its entirety in Kiangsi, they will undoubtedly restore the land to the former landlords and set up a virtual military dictatorship. Whether they will succeed in holding in check the millions of peasants who have become imbued with Soviet ideas is, in the light of past experience, extremely doubtful. The crucial question, however, is whether Chiang has been able to surround and destroy the Soviet armies, as asserted in the American press, or whether the principal Communist leaders—Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung—have escaped with their troops virtually intact and are now pushing westward to join the Red armies operating in Szechuan. (See map on page 638.) All of the evidence points clearly in the direction of the latter probability. It is significant, for example, that none of the Kiangsi engagements were severe enough to warrant the belief that the main body of the Red army was involved. On the other hand, numerous clashes have recently been reported in Hunan, Kwangsi, and Kweichow provinces, which are directly along the line of march between Kiangsi and Szechuan. The westward march of the Communists is confirmed, moreover, by the fact that all American missionaries have been ordered out of these areas, and it is reported that they will soon be withdrawn from Szechuan as well. The Canton government is seeking a $10,000,000 loan from British and American oil companies for the purpose of resisting the entry of the Reds into Kwangsi.

It is of more than passing significance that Chiang Kai-shek has not been on hand to direct his victorious troops in Kiangsi in person. Instead, he has spent the last few weeks on a tour of the northwestern provinces, where the authority of Nanking has always been extremely tenuous, with a view to obtaining the aid of the local militarists in a joint attack on the growing Communist "menace" in Szechuan.

A brief résumé of the growth of the Soviet districts in Szechuan during the past two years is given on another page of this issue. Judging by all reports, the governor of the province is barely holding his own against the present Communist force, and if the main body of the Red army succeeds in breaking through to join these troops, the whole province—one of the richest and most isolated in China—may fall into Soviet hands. Should the Communists be successful in establishing themselves in this province, it would be difficult to dislodge them even with bombing planes. Chiang's best hope would appear to lie in an attempt to crush the Soviet armies before they reach their destination. But this will be extremely difficult. The Reds possess a large and well-disciplined force which is more than a match for any of the troops now in their path. Chiang's airplanes will be useless away from their bases, and Japanese, British, and American gunboats will be greatly handicapped if they seek to aid Nanking here as they did in 1930 at Changsha.

It is no exaggeration to say that the march of the Chinese Red army, hundreds of thousands strong, through many hundreds of miles of hostile territory, dependent solely on the good-will of the peasants, is one of the most remarkable feats of modern military history. As far as the press is concerned, this dramatic event will in all probability remain unsung. But thousands of Americans will follow their struggle against overwhelming odds with keen sympathy and interest, and with confidence that the reactionary regime of Chiang Kai-shek will ultimately be overthrown.

The Scottsboro Defense

THE NATION has no wish unnecessarily to prolong discussion of the Scottsboro case, and it feels that the only governing factor in settling the dispute between opposing counsel as to who should argue the appeal before the United States Supreme Court should be the wishes of the defendants. To the end that these wishes be impartially determined we proposed last week that a committee of well-known lawyers be selected to take depositions from Norris and Patterson designating their counsel, and that such depositions be regarded as final by the two groups which are at present claiming to represent the defense. We are authorized to quote Samuel S. Leibowitz as being willing to agree to these conditions. As we go to press we are told that a reply from the International Labor Defense is being sent, which "in principle" accepts our proposal.

That the question of defense counsel has not been cleared up, despite assertions from the International Labor Defense that it, and it alone, is handling the appeal, is evident from affidavits and letters in the possession of Mr. Leibowitz which directly contradict corresponding affidavits in the possession of the I. L. D. It is evident that Norris and Patterson are being approached by both sides and that they are frightened enough alternately to accept either under whatever pressure is brought to bear upon them. As evidence of this we need merely quote two telegrams sent to Mr. Leibowitz on November 21, one signed Haywood Patterson and reading as follows: "Mr. Leibowitz sir I would like to see you. I am in a bad shape. Looking for you at your earliest convenience I have some very urgent matters to see you about";

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and one signed Clarence Norris, even more specific and damaging in its assertions: "Mr. Leibowitz I was informed by Attorney Mr. Powell from Birmingham if you representing me the I. L. D. would withdraw the stay of execution. I have signed with you and intend to stick. Let me know by return wire what will be done. Answer by Western Union." These wires have already been automatically described in the *Daily Worker* as forgeries, but they are as credible on their face as the telegrams from the mothers of several of the boys which reaffirm loyalty to the I. L. D.

It is fair to say, while the question of representation remains unsettled, that Mr. Fraenkel has proceeded steadily with the legal work of the case. The stay of execution was obtained on his and Mr. Pollak's request. On November 17 the petition and brief in the Norris case were filed by them in the United States Supreme Court. On November 28 a similar brief will be filed in the Patterson case. Elsewhere in this issue we publish Mr. Fraenkel's answer to our questions of last week with respect to the motions for appeal which were thrown out by the Alabama Supreme Court. The answer indicates no lack of good faith on Mr. Fraenkel's part and a seemingly incontrovertible attempt on the part of the court to block the defense at every possible point. The fact remains that the defense, after due deliberation, determined the final day to file the papers to be five days after the day determined by the court, although there was evidently some question about it even then—and as a result the papers were disallowed and Patterson may be out of court altogether and at the mercy of executive clemency.

This, however, may be considered a legal point which will have to be adjudicated at the proper time. To effect a settlement of the more immediate question of the just determination of counsel, *The Nation* once more repeats its offer to appoint an impartial and qualified committee and engages to find whatever funds are necessary to this end. The alternative will be to have the matter finally determined by the Supreme Court itself, an undignified and unnecessary proceeding which cannot fail in the meantime to work more hardship on defendants already scared out of their wits by the intricacies of court procedure, the disagreements of those who are supposed to be protecting them, and the awful shadow of the electric chair.

The Control of Arms

THROUGH Hugh R. Wilson, our Minister to Switzerland, President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull have presented to the steering committee of the Disarmament Conference a complete draft of a treaty for international armament control. It is the first offer of a draft treaty relating to disarmament or a cognate subject which the government has ever submitted to the conference, and as such it is of great significance. So is the complete change of position of Sir John Simon in the matter of instituting a munitions inquiry in Great Britain with precisely the same power of summoning witnesses and going to the bottom of things as that possessed by Senator Nye's committee in Washington. At first Sir John Simon said that the government would under no circumstances countenance such an inquiry. For this blunder he made a complete apology to the House of Commons, which is in itself proof that there was brought to bear upon him severe pressure not only from the public but from his fellow-members in the Cabinet, and the inquiry is now agreed to. Similarly, the presentation of the American draft treaty through Mr. Wilson is clearest proof that our government is well aware of the aroused public opinion in this country, of which we could give many specific proofs. Senator Nye himself has stated that in his judgment no such Senate inquiry has ever received more evidences of public approval. Weeks ago he had received no less than 13,000 letters, telegrams, and postcards of approval, and only three protests to the effect that he was disturbing business by his probe.

The latest dispatches from Geneva report that our draft treaty is receiving far more favorable consideration than had been thought possible. It was taken for granted that it would not have the discourteous and scornful reception given to the best proposal for disarmament ever made at Geneva, that brought forward by Litvinov on behalf of the Soviet Union, but it was thought that it would probably be allowed to die quietly in some pigeonhole. The proposed treaty covers all arms from hand grenades to naval ships. Five-year renewable licenses would be issued under it to private manufacturers, and governments would be required to inform Geneva of all licenses issued and of all arms items in the export and import trade. Details concerning warships would have to be supplied to a permanent commission composed of one representative of each signatory Power, which would have authority to make a special investigation in any country charged with a violation of the treaty, in addition to its regular inspections. There is nothing new or radical in this proposal that there should be regular inspections of a country's armaments, so far as the United States is concerned. President Roosevelt himself suggested it in his speech to the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Foundation on December 28, 1933. He was plainly not of the opinion that such an outside inspection would be a derogation or evidence of suspicion or distrust. Right in line with this is Article II of the proposed treaty, which reads: "The manufacture and trade in arms and implements of war being matters of interest to the public and international order, the high contracting parties assume entire responsibility for control of these matters on territories under their respective jurisdictions." Indeed, in June, 1934, the United States proposed national licensing as part of a general disarmament convention.

Obviously this principle implies that the United States is willing now to accept some active responsibility for international order, and that it feels that neutrality is not enough. We have gone from proposing a minor chapter in an international treaty to the major action of submitting a complete treaty for dealing with this momentous question. We are under no illusions as to the difficulties confronting the treaty. But France should welcome it because of its present fear of Germany, which has just led the Chamber of Deputies to vote 800,000,000 additional francs for the protection of its eastern boundaries, and the military authorities to apply for another great increase in the budget allowance for aircraft in order to bring the French air fleet up to the level of the new German one. Russia should certainly be eager for the treaty's adoption, and British support seems assured. Italy alone is holding out, but there is hope that the pressure of world opinion will force even Mussolini to heed the writing on the wall.

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Issues and Men

The Sorry Plight of the Republicans

IT is not often that politics affords as hearty a laugh as we have had out of the exchange of opinions between Senator Vandenberg of Michigan, the sole receiver (without bond) of the Republican Party, and Joe Robinson of Arkansas, Democratic leader of the Senate. Senator Vandenberg had relieved himself of some of those delightful platitudes we so often get from a whipped politician. Said he: "In this critical situation there ought to be a virtual coalition government. Any proposition that the President might submit on recovery should be accepted on its face by both parties as necessary legislation and not as a partisan matter." He even declared that the next Congress will confront "issues of such permanent and vital concern to the whole American people that it is not a good thing to talk about politics at all. We have had our political day." If that isn't hauling down the flag of opposition just when everybody who is left in the opposition ought to be as vigilant as possible, and determined to scrutinize every bit of legislation laid before the Congress by the Executive, what could be? But he got kicked for his pains, and in the most humiliating way, by Joe Robinson, who replied that evidently Vandenberg agreed to the principle, "If you can't lick 'em, jine 'em." He added that he had been told Vandenberg was likely to be the Republican candidate for the Presidency, and he suggested the following slogan, "Vacuity, Vacillation, and Vandenberg." Justice compels me to add Vandenberg's stipulation that there should be some reciprocity of course—if the Republicans under his leadership buried the hatchet the "plan ought to work both ways," and it could not work both ways as long as Postmaster Farley was the sole dispenser of patronage.

This awful revelation of the Vandenberg mind almost makes me agree with my friends the editors of *The Nation*, who have pronounced the Republican Party dead. I am a little leary of that because I have listened to so many Republican funeral sermons over the corpse of the Democratic Party. But I do admit that I have never seen the Democratic Party fall quite so low as the Republican has fallen now—that party of which Elihu Root once had the arrogance to say, "We alone are fit to rule." Nobody would venture to say anything like that now. The confusion of the Republican mind is shown by the proposals that the party be liberalized. Senator Vandenberg, for example, refers to the liberal Republican platform in Michigan, and declares it his ideal program for the country—a platform "that stands for social responsibility in government without socialism." But, bless Mr. Vandenberg's innocent heart, that is precisely the language in which Mr. Roosevelt would describe his policies. And how are you going to turn the Democratic rascals out if all you have got to offer the populace is an academic debate on just what degree of social responsibility without socialism the country should have? If the vote at the last election means anything, it is that the voters are just now ready for a very large degree of social responsibility.

There are other plaintive wails that the Republican Party must be liberalized. How ridiculous! The Republican Party waxed big and corrupt because it "fried the fat" out of the protected manufacturers, the holders of other special privileges, the captains of industry, and the richest men and women in America. These people who filled the coffers of the Republicans and enabled them to buy one election after another don't want any liberal Republican Party. They were completely satisfied with what they had. All they want is a revival of Coolidgism and Hooverism. Just now they are in such a state of panic that some of them are crowding to the Roosevelt band-wagon. That is another cause of laughter—but also of pity. In September the Chamber of Commerce of the United States most arrogantly and insolently submitted a detailed questionnaire to the President intended to put him on the spot, a questionnaire framed just as if its proponents were vice-regents of God Almighty. Ten days after the election the Chamber of Commerce, headed by the ineffable Silas H. Strawn of Chicago, fell down on its knees and licked the blacking off Franklin Roosevelt's shoes. Strawn was at least frank enough to admit that the complete change of attitude of the members was due to their recognition of the "realities of the political situation." Having been thoroughly licked they now virtuously announce that they are going to stand by the President, that business is going "to take the lead in insuring recovery." What kind of patriots have they been since March 4, 1933, anyhow? Were they up to this time only sufficiently interested in the recovery of this country and the rescue of millions from starvation to have it come on their own terms, in accordance with their own desires and ulterior aims? It is hard to make any other deduction from their self-abasement.

One thing is plain. The defend-our-liberties howls of the Republican Party and the American Liberty League are at an end. The latter never was anything but hypocrisy, coming from those men who set it up—men in and out of the press who up to now have never had one moment in which to voice protests against the innumerable infractions of personal liberty, of the right of free speech, free assembly, and free press, that have been going on in this country since the war. They seized upon this stick with which to beat the Democratic donkey because it was the only one their dull eyes happened to espy. Which reminds me that the American Civil Liberties Union is calling a very important conference in Washington to meet on December 8 and 9 to discuss the question of liberty under the New Deal. The conference is properly entitled an answer to President Roosevelt's question: "Has any American's liberty been endangered under the New Deal?" If he listens to some of the speeches that will be made at this conference he will learn things that will shock him.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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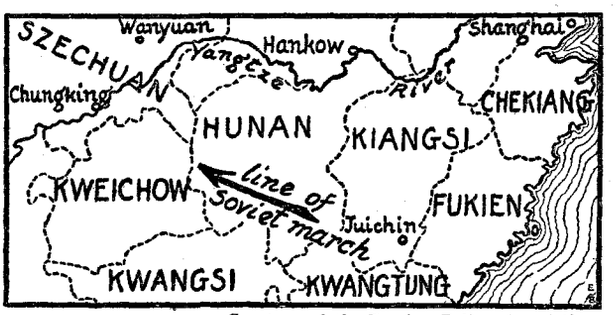
The Red Army Triumphs in Szechuan

By CRISPIAN CORCORAN

Peiping, October 30

TODAY the chief theme of discussion in China, overshadowing even the perennial question of Sino-Japanese relations, is the series of victories won by the Red armies in the provinces of Szechuan and Kweichow. Again, in their favorite manner, just when the official press was joyfully heralding the "annihilation of the Communist bandits in three months" the Chinese Soviets have been triumphant.

Szechuan, the largest and richest province of China proper, lies in West Central China and is watered by the upper Yangtze and its tributaries. It has a population of 60,000,000, an area equal to that of France and Germany combined, and a wealth of untapped natural resources. From time immemorial it has enjoyed the distinction of being politically the key province of China. Although usually in the background it has witnessed the beginning of many of the great historical movements. This was so at the time of the Han dynasty some two thousand years ago and was still true in 1911, when the uprising in Szechuan assured the final downfall of the Manchus, and in 1916, when Yuan Shih-k'ai, serenely preparing to assume the imperial dignity, was suddenly swept away like chaff by the revolt of Tsai Ao, having its root in the southwestern part of this province.



Courtesy of the Foreign Policy Association

The Reds first established themselves in northern Szechuan after a heroic march through the mountains of South Shensi at the end of 1932. Capturing the important cities of Nankiang, Tungkiang, Pachow (Pachung), and Suiting, they have held them, except for a few short interludes, until the present. There is a Soviet military administration, and banknotes issued by it circulate freely outside Soviet territory, being more willingly accepted than depreciated provincial paper. After a period of stabilization, the Red army, which has grown in this region from a few men to at least sixty thousand, resumed the advance at the end of August, 1934. Within a fortnight the provincial armies were absolutely paralyzed, Liu Hsiang, the governor of the province, had taken flight (to return later), and the press was full of rumors of the fall of Chengtu, the provincial capital. Missionaries, merchants, and landowners began going down the river in hundreds to Hankow, and millions of dollars were evacuated from the province, the transfer rate from Chunking to Hankow rising to the unheard-of sum of $70 to $80 per $1,000. The result was a sharp depreciation in the already unstable Szechuan banknote and the reduction of the province to a state of economic chaos. Delegations of the rich began arriving daily in Nanking, importunately insisting on the immediate dispatch of a government expedition headed by Chiang Kai-shek himself to prevent the "bolshevization" of the province. Meanwhile, out of this welter of confusion came another clear item of news. The Reds had fought a major encounter with the provincial troops, which had resulted in a loss to the enemy of 70,000 casualties, dead and wounded. Thirty thousand rifles had been captured.

The Reds invaded Szechuan from two directions, from their base in the north and from the southern provinces of Kweichow and Hunan. In the north they were commanded by Hsu Hsiang-chien, a renowned strategist, in the south by the famous Ho Lung and Hsiao Ke. Their plan seems to be a concerted advance toward Wanhsien on the Yangtze, the capture of which would cut Szechuan off from the lower Yangtze valley. If the Yangtze is reached, says a Reuter correspondent, "Chengtu will fall without fighting."

At the moment there appears to be nothing to stop Szechuan from falling completely into the hands of the Communists. Liu Hsiang, the governor of the province, has been unable to obtain the cooperation of ambitious regional militarists, nominally subject to him, who would be only too glad to see him smashed. The provincial troops have not been paid for months and mass desertions are not infrequent. Discontent is widespread among the population as a whole. Land and other taxes have been collected, according to reports received this summer, until 1980. To finance his anti-Red campaign Liu Hsiang has sent out collectors to obtain them for four years more, until 1984. A missionary recently arrived from Szechuan states that the peasants have organized a defense league and employ a peculiar form of protest strike against this new levy. When the collector comes around, the peasant leaves his land and retreats to the hills, presumably to join roving guerrilla bands. Of late the peasant movement has established connections with the Reds. The extent and gravity of this disaffection may be seen by the fact that the missionary referred to assures us that within the region covered by his station, embracing but a small part of the province, he believes that at least 10,000 peasants deserted their farms and destroyed their crops at the approach of the tax gatherer.

At one time there was a saying that everything that grows in the rest of China grows in Szechuan, with a few peculiar products thrown in. In natural wealth the province is unexcelled. Besides almost every variety of mineral, the province produces medicinal herbs such as *ma huang* (the essential of ephedrine) and ginseng, widely used in Chinese and Western medicine. Until a few years ago it produced enough rice to satisfy its own needs and provide large surpluses for export. Today Szechuan imports a great part of its rice, and its staple crop is opium, which the peasant is forced to plant because of the peculiar tax policy of the provincial government, under which no cheaper crop can possibly assure the farmer a livelihood. The amount of money

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that has gone down the river for rice during recent years has impoverished the province. Thus the only province in China never bothered by famine, drought, or flood is today the worst governed and financially the poorest. The Reds, according to the Reverend Howard Smith, who was held captive by them early this year, have abolished opium cultivation, and under their regime the farmers are returning to their land.

Under the circumstances it is safe to predict the imminent success of the Communists in Szechuan, which will place them in an extremely favorable position. In Kiangsi, though strong from a military standpoint, they were vulnerable to economic blockade. In Szechuan they are strategically and economically invulnerable, and have a stable base for expansion south, east, and northward. It is probable that they will take the last-named route through the sparsely populated and opium-ridden Northwest to effect a juncture with Turkestan and Soviet Outer Mongolia.

Kweichow, south of Szechuan, is also falling into Red hands. General Wang Chia-lieh, the ruling satrap, has been left in the lurch by his colleagues, and troops from French-dominated Yunnan are preparing to cross the border, ostensibly to help him out but actually to assume control of the province. The French cannot afford to have Red influence spread to Yunnan.

Chiang has no funds to send an expeditionary force to Szechuan. If money is forthcoming from foreign countries, as it has been for the campaign in Kiangsi, it will come from Britain. The British are interested in Szechuan for both strategic and economic reasons. Strategically, the province is important as a connecting link between British-dominated Tibet and the British sphere of influence on the lower Yangtze. Its economic possibilities have just begun to be exploited. Before assuming the post of High Commissioner of Egypt, Sir Miles Lampson, former British Minister to China, made the arduous journey to Szechuan and stayed for some time at Chunking. Not long afterward it became known that Liu Hsiang had negotiated a loan in London of £20,000,000 to be used chiefly for financing an anti-Red campaign. In June, 1934, a member of the Szechuan banking firm of Young Brothers journeyed to England and negotiated an agreement with the Edward Bunting Corporation of London, which, besides providing for the creation of the British-controlled Lien Yi Finance Corporation to handle investments of British capital and investigate industrial and other possibilities of Szechuan, contained this significant item:

> Any individual or group in Szechuan able to raise 20 per cent of the capital needed for a projected industrial enterprise in Szechuan will receive financial aid from the Edward Bunting Corporation, to be made through the Lien Yi Finance Corporation under organization.

This statement is taken not from a "bolshevik" source but from H. G. W. Woodhead's diehard monthly, *Oriental Affairs,* in which a Chinese writer goes on to say that "this agreement will entitle the British finance body to 80 per cent of the total value of industries in the province." The existence of this financial agreement was not known here until the receipt of agitated messages from Chinese students in London who charged that Szechuan's resources were being surrendered to British imperialism. The Nanking government glossed over the telegram, made the gesture of appointing an investigating committee, but to date has not investigated anything.

Thus the Reds threaten not only Great Britain's strategic plans but also a newly discovered field of investment for British capital. It is probable that Britain will tempt Chiang Kai-shek to throw his forces against the Szechuan Reds with promises of support and threats of dire consequences if he fails to make the attack. If Szechuan goes, Yunnan follows, and this brings the French into the picture. Nanking is in a hole and Canton is shrewd enough to use a threatened alliance with the Soviets as a bargaining point, while the Soviets will probably play a political game of their own, utilizing the many differences among their Chinese and foreign enemies to consolidate their position, which, despite the loss of Kiangsi, appears stronger than ever.

The Radicals Are Tired

By RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Washington, November 26

IT is my impression that the radicals in Washington are in the dumps. I do not know enough of them to be entitled to generalize. But I believe that many have reached the end of a cycle and are at what brokers call "a new low." Last year they swarmed to the capital to behold a burst of light, for the first time in decades, in which it appeared possible to achieve something substantial for social government. They took literally the New Deal, the language of the President and the spirit of reform, and they worked day and night for quick and genuine results. Then came the head-on collision with realities. Obstructions proved to be difficult to surmount. The opposition was able to use the tedious machinery of government with invisible skill. After more than a year's ceaseless fighting, beset by recurring defeats, they are weary and disheartened. In each case they might have won their fights, as they conceived them, if the President had backed them up. Many of them now speak of him with unrestrained skepticism. Hence, the conviction that he has "swung to the right" is stronger among radicals than among conservatives. There still are radicals who keep their trust in his innate liberalism, and reassure themselves by explaining that his technique of indirection is bound to make him appear more conservative than he really is. But the new atmosphere of friendliness with business is one of gloom for the crusading spirit.

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THE first press conference of Francis Biddle, successor of Lloyd Garrison as chairman of the Labor Relations Board, was in refreshing contrast to the flagging enthusiasm in many other government offices. Mr. Biddle has a heart and it is not broken. He has courage and forthrightness. When asked if he accepted the principle of majority rule,

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he did not shy away. He accepts it; he is convinced that the principle soon will be tested in the courts. He is confident of cooperation from the Department of Justice in getting enforcement of the decisions of the board. A few hours after the conference he was in consultation with that department, and the Houde case was at last scheduled for early trial.

"Why are you so sure of prompt labor enforcement after sixteen months in which only one labor case is in the courts?" asked a skeptical questioner.

"I have pretty good backing to feel more than a mere hope in this matter," was his reply.

No one could doubt that Mr. Biddle believes in Section 7-a, and that he has been given assurance that it will not remain a dead letter. The procedure should be to end the doubts of the constitutionality of the act and the interpretation of it by the Labor Relations Board, and to put teeth into the enforcement by new legislation.

Industry sees the coming of collective bargaining and majority rule. Already it is shifting its position. It is on the way to "recognize" outside unions. It will "negotiate" with them. To the uninitiated this will look like handsome, generous surrender. The crux of collective bargaining, however, is a wage contract. This is vigorously set forth in the Houde decision. Collective bargaining will be genuine when industry agrees to elections, majority rule, and negotiation with representatives of the majority, leading finally to a wage contract. The offer of collective bargaining made by General Motors promised everything but the wage contract. None of the industries where new unions are being organized, as far as can be learned, have intimated that they are ready for wage contracts, negotiated by an elected majority, where the right to strike is unimpaired. But the shift in the position of the industries is significant. Seen in conjunction with the confidence of Mr. Biddle, it suggests that the President is known to be moving toward enforcement of 7-a.

Negotiations between the United States Steel Corporation and the A. F. of L. on terms for a truce have reached an impasse. The steel offer was for recognition of the union, but the employers would not recognize the majority principle nor permit elections. Their move was designed to save the company unions, while seeming to go along with the President on the issue of collective bargaining. The issue of proportional representation is bound to play a big part in all discussions in industries where company unions have been strong. "P. R.," as it is familiarly called in Europe, once had many devoted followers there, because it appeared the last word in fair play. But since the collapse of German democracy and the growing unworkability of the French party system the advocates of P. R. are on the run. In Europe the motto "Divide and rule" has been rewritten: "Divide and fail to rule."

* * * * *

SENATOR BORAH came to Washington soon after the election, called his own press conferences, and took his accustomed place on the front page. He has done it before without demonstrating anything more than that a gifted and honest man can by himself be a force in government. This time he comes with a new potential identity. He may become the leader of the opposition. I say "may," because it isn't up to him. It is up to the rank and file of the party, who have to choose between him, or someone like him, and the Old Guard proprietors of the party machine. Senator Borah will lead at least his own opposition to the President and the New Deal, believing with deepest conviction that the country has been done almost irreparable injury by the weakening of the safeguards against monopoly in business. If the Republican Party can accept this doctrine, Borah obviously will be the leader of the opposition in Congress. The Senator is in excellent health after his operation of last year, but he is not young enough to head a Mosaic expedition out of the wilderness, since the wanderings are to take some years. But he is young enough to formulate the conception of a new party. Moreover, he is going into the opposition. No life-saving schemes like Senator Vandenberg's proposed coalition for him. He will not oppose everything, but believing the President has gone to the right, where he thinks he always belonged, he also believes the Republican Party can only be reborn as a liberal party. There are two main schools of thought about the future of the Republican Party. One holds that it will come back as a conservative reaction against radical tinkering by the Democrats. The other holds that the Democrats now will turn "safe and sane" and that the future of the Republican Party is to fulfil in reality the broken promise of the New Deal. If the conservative school has its way, Senator Borah will not be leader of the opposition. Nobody will, for some time to come.

The Senator opened his campaign by attacking the relief administration. This might become more sensational if Harry Hopkins were not an administrator of first-rate ability with a personal character beyond reproach. (Imagine the difference if the President had made Mr. Farley head of the FERA!) Senator Borah has been careful not to appear to be impeaching Mr. Hopkins. He is not gunning for the FERA. His chief objective is to make the FERA responsible, as it is not definitely enough responsible, for expenditures by State authorities. The use of relief funds for political influence, which has been widespread, has not been managed through Mr. Hopkins but through State officials, who have been accessible to the Farleyites. Mr. Hopkins, correctly but perhaps narrowly, has not assumed control over the State dispensers of federal money. Senator Borah will move to have the gap between State and federal relief eradicated either by new legislation or by reinterpretation of the present statute. There is some scandal in the distribution of relief, but it is not in the biggest sense a national scandal, and the existence of Harry Hopkins probably will prevent the Borah onslaught from causing a political earthquake. If the campaign ends in federal supervision of State relief expenditures, and in more relief reaching the individuals in need of it, the Senator will have added signally to his achievement in public service.

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THE State Department's plan for licensing the arms trade is another step toward bringing the United States across the threshold of the League of Nations. The steps are worth recapitulation. Joining the disarmament conference was the first one of any significance, though we had already cooperated in all the minor League activities. Then came our virtual membership for the moment of the Far East crisis. This was followed by our joining the International Labor Office. A licensing system for the arms

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trade was proposed at the disarmament conference, and would be effected by treaty. But the American plan contemplates a permanent disarmament commission, which obviously would be a League commission.

If Japan should denounce the Washington treaty, what more logical and effective step could be taken by the United States than to join the League? The question is being asked in Washington. As Russia joined the League to limit the possibility of German aggression, we might join it as a partial counterbalance to Japanese expansion in Asia. The League has changed since the early days when America decided against membership. In its present stage it cannot be considered merely the enforcing arm of the Treaty of Versailles. Its failure to halt the advance of Japan in Manchuria proved that it was not any more an organization to make war on an aggressor. It is even a dubious instrument of economic and financial sanctions. The superstate idea has vanished. Everyone has come to recognize that the sovereign states in the League are bound only by their sovereign decisions. A government is committed only to back up its own vote. Despite these almost humiliating deflations of the original concept, the League remains a center of cooperation, based on certain doctrines of recognized conduct by states.

Had Russia been a member of the League during the Manchurian crisis, the probability is that international cooperation might have restrained Japan. With Britain, Russia, and the United States in the League the opposition against Japanese expansion would at least be stronger than it is. That is why joining the League is advanced as the most useful answer to the expected denunciation of the Washington treaty. As a matter of practical politics, the President would not be expected to propose it before the next election. He could, however, speak of it during the campaign so that his victory in 1936 could be interpreted as a mandate. In the meantime America will adhere to the World Court, another step toward the League. The Senators committed against adherence have shrunk to a handful.

American membership in the Labor Office will have two consequences which have not been underscored. The American representation at the annual meeting will consist of two groups, one of employers, one of labor. The labor group will be chosen from the American Federation of Labor. It will speak for the vast body of American labor, organized or otherwise. This will increase the prestige of the A. F. of L. among unorganized workers. The other result will be the education of American employers by contact with their European colleagues. They will discover that in many respects they are well behind the times in their outlook on labor and social questions. European employers, on the whole, have long since accepted most of the principles which are still choking American industrialists, and have passed on to new problems.

[*Mr. Swing contributes a regular weekly letter from Washington.*]

Revolt Against Complacency

By HAROLD J. LASKI

London, November 4

LAST March, for the first time in its history, the Labor Party won control over the London County Council. Now it has followed up that sufficiently remarkable success with overwhelming gains in the municipal elections. In London it has won power in fifteen out of twenty-eight boroughs. In some of them the victory is so complete that not a single Conservative has been returned. In others, Fulham for example, where Labor had no previous representation on the council, it has won twenty-seven out of forty seats. It has captured the government of places like Hull, Oldham, and Stoke. Altogether, in some 3,000 contests it has made over 700 net gains. Not in many years has there been so striking a change in the disposition of municipal power.

These results must be read in the context of the recent by-elections. At Swindon, in a straight fight, the Labor candidate, Dr. Addison (an ex-cabinet minister), was successful by nearly 3,000. In Lambeth not only did the Labor candidate get a majority over all his opponents combined, but the government candidate, a representative of the little Labor group which tries to keep up the fiction that the Prime Minister is still a Socialist, was a very poor third on the poll and was fortunate in saving the deposit which, since 1918, all candidates forfeit who do not poll one-eighth of the votes cast.

These results mean first and foremost, I think, that the magic of the National Government has gone. It has become a polite fiction which deceives nobody except Mr. MacDonald. The electors want a progressive policy; and they see that there is no chance of such a policy while the present ministers are in office. Public opinion is resentful over the lack of any determined housing policy. It dislikes profoundly the means test. It sees no reason for the niggardly reaction which still pervades the government's attitude toward education. It is profoundly suspicious of the Incitement to Disaffection bill, which so flagrantly attacks historic liberties that bishops like the Bishop of Birmingham, learned Conservative lawyers like Sir William Holdsworth, eminent novelists like E. M. Forster and H. G. Wells have fought stoutly against its passage. Even more, public opinion is deeply alarmed about the international situation. The suspended animation into which the Disarmament Conference has fallen, the obvious breakdown of the naval conversations with Japan, the gravity of the situation in the Saar, the American revelations of the habits of British armament firms—all these have thrown a clear light on the lack of any coherent will to progressive leadership in the government. Having got the protective tariff for which they longed, the Tories have now lapsed into that somnolent opposition to all serious change which is their real desire. Between the mind of the government and the mind of the people there is today in Great Britain a wider gulf than at any other period I can remember. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that if there were a general election today Labor would win something like 200 seats. Outside the little Lloyd George group in Wales, I do not think a single Liberal would be returned; and it is clear to everyone that the Prime Minister's own supporters would be swept out of existence.

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But I do not think—short of a crisis over the coming India bill—that we shall have a general election until the summer of 1936. Governments with a fortuitous majority do not consult the country when they know that masses of their supporters will never see the benches of the House of Commons again; and Mr. MacDonald, whose own future is one of the few definitely predictable things in our politics, will not leave Downing Street until he is driven out. The government, moreover, needs something like eighteen months to prepare for the election campaign it clearly has in view. A recent speech of Mr. Runciman's is a good index of the attitude it proposes to take. It will try to reproduce the panic conditions of 1931. It will tell the electors that a Labor victory means bankruptcy and ruin. It will predict a run on the banks—Mr. Runciman said he would draw out every penny he had and advise his friends to do the same—and a flight of capital abroad. It will urge the electorate to realize that a government defeat throws the constitutional system into the melting-pot.

What effect these tactics will have eighteen months from now it is still too early to predict. Nothing, of course, is more nonsensical than the idea of the Labor Party as a revolutionary party. Its mind is overwhelmingly bent on social reform, and the temper of any government it made under normal conditions would certainly involve no break with the historic traditions of our politics. What one is increasingly tempted to doubt is whether it will be given those normal conditions. There, I think, it is pretty clear that the left wing of Labor is correct, and the people of Mr. Morrison's opportunist school wholly wrong. The evidence accumulates that the movement of Tory opinion is definitely to reaction. On India, housing, armaments, Japan, its pressure on the government does not enable what there is of progressivism in the Tory ranks to make any impact on the government. The Tory machine has even refused to cooperate with Lord Cecil in his effort to get an expression of the people's view of peace by means of a national referendum. Ministers have so often told the country that they have saved it that they now begin to believe it themselves. During the recent municipal elections one distinguished academic figure told me that though he was not a Socialist he proposed to vote Labor for the first time because he could not stand the "insufferable complacency" of the government. I think that is a widespread feeling among thinking people.

But I think the sense also grows that the abyss between parties is becoming dangerously wide. It cannot be too often said that the strength of parliamentary government depends upon the major political parties agreeing in their outlook on fundamental questions. That agreement is disappearing. The forces behind the Tory Party are beginning to doubt whether they can afford a Labor victory eighteen months from now. They are not overtly fascist. But there is creeping into their outlook a temper which could easily accommodate itself to fascism. They are beginning to doubt whether we ought to return to what even Mr. Baldwin has called "the dog fight" of party politics. There is a growing tendency, very marked in all the municipal elections, for all parties to combine against Labor. People like Lord Eustace Percy are wondering whether a nation cannot devote too much of its time to politics. There is a significant willingness, among the comfortable classes, to say openly that the National Government is the British alternative to fascism.

The treatment of Sir Oswald Mosley and his henchmen by the courts is significant. Either they are not convicted at all or they are let off with insignificant sentences for offenses which, if committed by a Communist, would quite unquestionably entail imprisonment without the option of a fine. Sir Oswald has clearly large funds at his disposal; and it is notable that no part of his case is more popular with his audiences than his attacks on the Jews. I do not regard Sir Oswald as a dangerous person. He is neither sincere enough nor selfless enough to be a significant leader himself. But I do believe that the attitude of mind he represents is more widespread than is usually recognized, and that it would easily accommodate itself to a quasi-fascist interpretation of the constitution if (a) there were a big Labor victory, and if (b) this victory were accompanied by the kind of financial crisis to which men of the Runciman type look forward as the best means of beating Labor. Even so usually reasonable a man as Mr. Baldwin makes speeches nowadays in which he warns the electorate that a Labor victory means dictatorship. He, at least, has insight enough to know that the men who now dominate the Labor Party are at least as moderate as those in the 1929 government, and that drastic measures would never emanate from them except in the stress of emergency. But even Mr. Baldwin is prepared to use the argument of dictatorship as a weapon to victory; and I know many people whose confidence in his sense of fair play is such as to persuade them, without further analysis, to believe him.

What is endangering our politics is not the program of the Labor Party, which—heaven knows—is mild enough, but the unwillingness of the government to embark on those large schemes of social reform which are urgent necessities. The people of this country would welcome any progressive administration; if they cannot get that administration from the right, then they will get it from the left. If the Tories went in for a great housing scheme, if they raised the school-leaving age, if they showed generosity to the unemployed, if they really exerted themselves at Geneva in the realm of disarmament, then I do not think they could fail to win the next general election. But they support a government which will do none of these things. They try to maintain their show of faith in a Prime Minister who is the laughing-stock of the House of Commons and hardly dares to address a meeting in his own constituency. They get infinitely more excited about a bill to regulate the law of betting than they do over Japan's policy in the Far East—for which many of them have a sneaking admiration. They are much more tender to the interests of the owners of slum property than they are to those of that slum dweller about whose tragic fate they moan in public. They can vote twenty millions for the air force without a pang, but when it comes to educational advance, they acquiesce cheerfully in the view that the nation cannot afford it.

If the recovery of trade were profound, all this would be less important than it is in the present juncture of affairs. But the recovery is partial and sporadic. The pall of fear has not been lifted from Europe. There is still no confidence in stability. The drift to Labor is the outcome of the common man's sense that the complacency of the National Government is wholly out of place in so critical an epoch as ours. He will not endure that complacency much longer. When he finally revolts against it, there will be immense changes in the British scene.

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Taxation in the New Social State

VI. Educational Finance

By JOHN K. NORTON

EACH year of the depression has brought public education closer to the brink of disaster. One-fourth of the cities of the United States have closed their night schools and part-time classes for adults and youths. Estimates of the number of youths who have taken to the road indicate hundreds of thousands. Special provisions for physically and mentally handicapped children have been drastically reduced or entirely eliminated by many communities. Badly needed school buildings, 80 per cent completed, have stood for months deteriorating in the open weather for lack of funds to complete them. Expenditures for school buildings this year promise to be less than 30 per cent of the amount spent in 1930.

A quarter of a million teachers, to whom is intrusted the education of 7,000,000 children, are scheduled this year to receive wages below the minimum fixed for unskilled factory workers by the blanket code of the NRA. Even these meager salaries in many cases will not be paid in full. Tens of thousands of rural school districts have been forced either to close their schools or to cut their terms to three, four, or five months. Institutions of higher education have also suffered severely. They have reported for 1933-34 total receipts that are 30 per cent lower than in 1930 and total expenditures that are 10 per cent lower.

The trouble in which the schools find themselves is due to a variety of complex causes. Many of these are the direct result of the depression. But the difficulties of education cannot be wholly accounted for on this score. One reason that the schools have broken down or come perilously close to disaster in so many communities is found in the obsolete methods which we use to finance education. These methods were established early in the nineteenth century. They developed in the decades following the Jacksonian revolution. In this period the battle was won to make the schools free and to support them through taxation. The local community—the town, the township, or the specially created school district—became the responsible governmental unit. The property tax, locally levied and collected, became the source of practically all school revenue. Today, a century later, essentially the same methods are used in raising school funds. Eighty per cent of school revenue now comes from local sources, practically all of it from a tax on property. During this century, however, conditions have arisen which make this method of financing schools as obsolete as the ox cart.

In the first place, tax-paying ability now exists in a variety of forms. A century ago land made up most of our wealth, and land ownership was a fair measure of ability to pay taxes. It is not so in 1934. A man may enjoy a large income but own no property. He therefore does not pay a local property tax for schools. He may own a house and lot or a farm, but have little ability to pay for schools. He may lose his job, but this does not lower his school tax. If he is a farmer, his sales of produce may approach zero. He still receives a tax bill for the support of education. The local school district, limited to the use of a property tax, finds it impossible to take account of these new conditions. As a result the schools of many communities are poorly supported even in prosperous times. In depression periods tax delinquency forces hundreds of local school districts into insolvency.

Secondly, wealth is no longer distributed with the evenness characteristic of a century ago. Circumstances now frequently concentrate large manufacturing plants, docks, and other income-producing enterprises in one community. These concerns market their products throughout the State, the nation, or even the world. But the property which results from this far-flung economic activity is taxed solely by the community, so far as schools are concerned. A neighboring school district, although rich in children, may be comparatively poor in taxable property. Its schools languish even in normal times and close their doors in periods of economic depression.

A third factor which operates with disastrous effect on the schools grows out of increasing economic specialization, which has produced many one-industry towns. So long as this industry does well, workers and owners find it possible to pay their taxes. A sudden drop in business resulting from a depression, a change in styles, an invention, or any other unforeseen event may put this industry on its back, financially speaking. The whole community soon finds itself in a similar position. Thus the hazards of economic life deny children their educational birthright.

Such are the factors which have made the local school districts of the United States increasingly impotent in their efforts to support schools. The situation calls for a radical reconstruction of American educational finance in a number of directions.

First, we should abolish most of the existing local school districts. Modern methods of transportation and communication have removed the only excuse they ever had for existence. In addition to being obsolete from a fiscal point of view, they are educationally inefficient and financially wasteful. They should be replaced by a much smaller number of local districts, adequate in size both as to territory and population. These reorganized units of school administration should be expected to raise a minor rather than a major fraction of school revenue. A few States have substantially accomplished this reform. Maryland is one example.

Secondly, the various State governments should assume responsibility for raising most of the revenue for school support. This money should be raised largely through income, inheritance, business, and other taxes, levied according to the principle of ability to pay. It should be distributed to the reorganized local districts so as to provide a satisfactory minimum of financial support for the education of each child, without requiring any district to levy more than a nominal local tax on real estate. The methods whereby

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this may be done are already known. The procedure reduced to its elements is as follows:

1. The State decides that it is necessary for every locality to have at least a minimum amount of financial support per pupil in attendance in order to finance an acceptable public-school program.

2. The State calculates the sum required in each school district to finance this minimum or foundation school program.

3. The State determines the amount of money which each school district can raise by a nominal and uniform local tax on real estate, and requires that this tax shall be levied.

4. The State appropriates for the support of schools in each locality sufficient money, along with that raised by the local tax, to finance the foundation program of education which it wants to make possible in every community.

5. The local district is left in control of its schools both financially and educationally. If it wishes to levy a higher local tax than the nominal one upon which State aid is contingent, it may do so. It is not limited in the expenditure of either the local or the State school money except by general laws of the usual type affecting education. A few States have already taken this step toward the reconstruction of educational finance. New York is an example.

A third reform is required if American educational finance is to be brought up to date. The federal government must recognize that it has an interest in the maintenance of a defensible level of educational support in every State. It must meet the financial obligation which this interest involves. The same factors which make it impossible for the locality to bear more than a minor fraction of the cost of school support are also operating to diminish the ability of the State governments to finance an adequate educational program. Wealth tends to concentrate in certain States, even though it may result from economic activities of the most far-flung type. Taxable income dodges between States with increasing agility. Even more important, the federal government is increasingly claiming for its own use most of the modern types of taxes from which State revenue must also be derived. These factors combine to make it financially impracticable for a growing number of States, even though they fully accomplish such fundamental reforms as those already cited, to provide a reasonable level of educational support. These considerations increasingly urge that the federal government assist the States in financing an adequate foundation program of education for all the children in the country.

The federal government has already been forced to take account of the current crisis in educational finance. During 1933-34 it appropriated approximately $150,000,000 to bolster up the sagging educational programs of a number of States, and to finance certain new projects such as programs of adult education. Emergency aid in some form has been extended to all levels of education from the nursery school through the university. This assistance in certain sections has played an important role in preventing the collapse of certain phases of educational work and in providing relief for unemployed teachers.

The tragedy of this development is that the financial aid provided the schools has been distributed as a phase of the federal relief program. A series of evils has been the result. Off-hand administrative decisions have been the basis for determining the allotment of federal funds to each State. Relief officials unacquainted with educational conditions have prescribed procedures inconsistent with desirable school practice. As a consequence, the money expended has not accomplished maximum results and the effective administration of the schools has been interfered with.

The conditions which have recently forced the federal government to come to the aid of the schools are not peculiar to the depression. Their evil effects have merely been amplified by the economic crisis. The National Survey of School Finance conducted by the United States Office of Education revealed that throughout the prosperous decade of the twenties there were thousands of districts with substandard schools of a most inadequate type. The facts indicate that the localities and States involved will be unable to provide adequate funds for their schools even though they make the maximum financial effort which it is practical and reasonable to expect.

Now is the logical time for the federal government to begin the development of a comprehensive and permanent program for the support of public education. The aim should be the establishment of a national minimum of financial support for the education of every child irrespective of his residence. This minimum should be financed jointly by the nation and the States, under arrangements which require all States to contribute according to their tax-paying ability. Dangerous political and cultural consequences are bound to result from a situation in which there exist the most extreme differences in the level of educational opportunity offered children in different States. National financial interest in education need not and should not involve the weakening of the principle that education is a matter for State control and local management. In fact, the time has come when it is clear that State control and local management can be effective only if the national government comes into the situation and uses its superior tax-raising ability to guarantee educational opportunity for all children.

Any program for the financing of education should consider the needs of higher education as well as those of the elementary and secondary schools. Federal funds for the partial support of higher education, like those for the lower schools, should be transmitted through the States. The allocation of funds to each State should be based upon some definite measure of its educational needs at all levels from elementary school to college.

Viewed in its larger aspects, the reconstruction of American educational finance is merely a phase of the problem of reforming all governmental organization and taxation procedure. It involves a reorganization and simplification of local governmental units. It requires the assumption by the State government of certain responsibilities which the localities were competent to perform under a less complex and interdependent economic order. It involves recognition of the fact that under conditions existing in the twentieth century the superior tax-raising power of the federal government must be employed if certain social needs of utmost importance to the common welfare are to be satisfied.

[*This is the sixth of a series of ten articles on taxation planned and edited by Professor Paul Studenski. The seventh, on the coordination of local, State, and federal finance, by Professor Clarence Heer of the University of North Carolina, will be published in the issue of December 19.*]

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In the Driftway

EVERY so often an editor writes what he thinks of as an innocent little article which he puts in his paper in the absence of some more weighty discussion of an Important Subject, and to his amazement his readers rise in a body, award him the literary prize of the year, threaten him with a libel suit, shoot him, or otherwise bestow on him attentions which more considered pieces seem never to command. This is one of the recognized hazards of the editorial profession, and unless the shooting is too persistent, it is regarded as more pleasurable than painful. The Drifter recalls that some years ago a few remarks on the consumption of lettuce in the United States were thrown out in an absent-minded moment by one of his colleagues, and that for months afterward *The Nation's* clipping service was deluged with reprints taken not only from almost every newspaper and periodical in this country but from those of such distant and unrelated parts of the globe as Australia, South Africa, and Siam. A more unscrupulous journal might have devoted itself to a discussion of lettuce eating thereafter, but *The Nation* is of course above such devices.

* * * * *

IN the issue of June 20, 1895, a *Nation* editor gave forth some animadversions on the horse versus the dog and the bicycle. The general conclusions of the article were that the bicycle was a more efficient and useful means of locomotion and the dog a more intelligent and agreeable animal about the home. The horse was disposed of in a final although friendly manner, and a nice little epitaph for him was quoted in lines to the Duke of Wellington's mount at Waterloo. When he finished the piece, the editor must have tossed it over to the composing room with hardly a second thought and must have at once turned to less trivial affairs. But the correspondence from irate readers that followed in subsequent issues surely gives but a fraction of the tempest that he aroused. The following week appeared a fiery communication from a gentleman named Arnold, entitled The Dirty Dog. This referred to "the filthy and disgusting habits of the dog" and his "outrages against common decency," described him as one who would "howl at night and rend the sky with discordant yelps and cries," and pointed out that of 174 times in which Shakespeare mentioned the dog in each case he used some contumelious epithet. Even the Bible was cited: "Give not that which is holy unto dogs"; and Mr. Arnold added this emphatic peroration:

> Nature has made the dog a dirty animal in all his habits and sympathies. A pig is a sybarite in comparison. No ages of artificial and unnatural association will ever make him other than what he is, more greedy, more annoying, and more repulsive than in that wild state into which he so easily relapses, and that without the least reluctance.

* * * * *

AS might have been expected, on the following week readers sprang to the defense of the horse and included the bicycle in their general condemnation. One correspondent, in pointing out the aesthetic superiority of the horseman over the cyclist, declared that "the figures which writhe around our streets can no more acquire nor comprehend the art [of horsemanship] than a lackey can a concerto." But the prize-winning diatribe answered Mr. Arnold more directly—by transferring his epithets directed at the dog with considerable cogency right into the heart of the home. "Now that the dog and the horse have been touched up in the columns of your veracious journal," he wrote, "it seems no more than fair to animadvert on another pest to human kind . . . I refer to the young child." He "serves no useful purpose; his manners in the natural state are execrable, and he is not even a safe ornament." ". . . to listen to a young child sucking in his soup, slobbering over a bone, or champing at his bread, gurgling wind, and audibly grunting—that is enough to drive one to strong drink." *The Nation,* perhaps wisely, closed the correspondence at this point. The cries of outraged mothers must have rung long in its ears nevertheless. And for a long time to come the editors must have felt it wise to stick to the protective tariff, the income tax, or bimetallism—subjects about which there might indeed be a difference of opinion but comparatively little threat to life and limb.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

From the Daring Young Man—

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Louis Kronenberger took two socks at me (*Times Book Review* and *The Nation*), but I think I'll only need one, and a small and polite one at that, humbly and gratefully.

First: If I am an exhibitionist, a verbalist, a poseur, a nose-thumber, a prima donna (wow), and a victim of genius mania, as Kronenberger says (and I don't say I am not), then every conscious and living man in this country is each of these things, including (begging his pardon) Kronenberger. Unless of course he is advancing the theory that he is unalive, which would be dreadful. Careful study of reviews discloses that I am being objected to on the grounds that I am too much alive, talk about myself too much, and don't write well enough.

Reply and explanation, disciplined and humble: Too many contemporary literary techniques and styles are swiftly seeking to change man to a machine in the hope of making valid many null theories regarding the relationship between life (man) and civilization (the state), and my idea has been to upset this idiotic apple-cart as swiftly as might be, because I honestly believe if it is not upset, American writing is going to find itself in a lovely vacuum in no time at all.

Man is full of contradictions, and I would like to know on what grounds a man becomes a poseur or a prima donna because he is variously serious, clever, humble, proud, mean, generous, evil, and good. And for the scientific information of Kronenberger I would like to inform him that the ego and the universe are one and inseparable.

Privately it is immaterial to me what anybody thinks of my writing, but less privately, speaking on behalf of the coming generation of writers, many of whom are in correspondence with me, and all of whom are very sick of the old cut-and-dried rules and forms and limitations, I must humbly ask wise critics to hold their horses a year or two and give the boys a break. Literature is important only as it enriches life, and when literature hampers the free growth of the human spirit, no matter how perfect it may be technically, it is lousy, that's all.

San Francisco, November 7 WILLIAM SAROYAN

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The American Circle: A New Instrument of Public Opinion

To the Editors of The Nation:

Your readers may be interested in the American Circle, a new instrument for revealing and giving expression to the thought of private citizens of this country. This organization, if it can be called such, is purely informal, with no constitution, officers, dues, or obligations. It has grown from the letters of an unknown citizen to his friends into a national "committee of correspondence" on the state of the nation. It enables private citizens all over this country to take counsel together, come nearer to the truth about public questions, arrive at a practical consensus of opinion on fundamental things, and make their opinions known and their influence felt in public affairs.

I have lived for considerable periods of my life in New York and New England, on the Pacific Coast, in the Middle West, and in the South. Among the country-wide acquaintance thus formed, a number of people somehow acquired the habit of writing me about economic and political matters. My informal replies had at least the merit of sincerity and apparently some other qualities that appealed to my friends, and to their friends, for my circle of correspondents widened as time went on.

Lately their growing concern about affairs in this country brought about such an increase in this correspondence that I hit upon the expedient of writing the same letter to the whole circle. With this reply of mine I would inclose copies of their letters to me, or extracts from them. Thus everybody was placed in possession of the thought of the whole circle. These composite letters have been more interesting and stimulating documents than any of us could have produced single-handed.

Today the American Circle consists of people from every State, from thousands of city, suburban, and rural districts, from practically every occupation and all conditions and stations in life. Their letters constitute a representative cross-section of the thought of the American private citizen as distinguished from the office seeker or the office holder, the partisan and the special pleader.

My part in all this is something like that of the moderator of a New England town meeting. I preside over this meeting of minds—these composite letters—state the case as fairly as I can, maybe offer a few opinions of my own just to start the ball rolling, and then the real business of the meeting, and the fun, begins—when the members of the American Circle have their say.

Perhaps the readers of *The Nation* would like to see how this idea of the American Circle works out in practice. During the recent political campaign, and since, I received an astonishing number of questions and expressions of interest with respect to the possible formation of a new political party. I am attaching my letter to the American Circle on that subject. I should be particularly interested in the opinions of the readers of *The Nation,* as well as in the ideas of members of the American Circle. A complete, separately printed, composite letter on this subject will be mailed to any reader who cares to write me for it in care of *The Nation.*

New York, November 24 Mark Granite

[*The Editors of* The Nation *would also be interested in knowing the opinions of* Nation *readers on the formation of a new political party. They print below Mr. Granite's letter to the American Circle, and such responses to it as seem of sufficient interest will appear in an early issue.*]

Coming: The United Liberal Party

(A Letter to the American Circle)

Just as I sit down to construct a new party and present it for the consideration of the American Circle, I find that Mark Sullivan has beaten me to it and, in three sentences, has not merely taken all the Republicans and most of the Democrats for his new and hypothetical Conservative Party but has gone farther! He has already held an election and has soundly beaten the new liberal party I was about to propose, by an overwhelming majority. Listen to this:

"The Republicans," says Mr. Sullivan in the New York *Herald Tribune* of November 22, "got roughly 13,000,000 votes, the Democrats roughly 17,000,000. It is surely fair to estimate that the entire Republican 13,000,000 were conservative. And can it be doubted that a large part of the Democrats' 17,000,000 was conservative? . . . The combined vote [of a new conservative party] would outnumber the votes for a non-conservative party perhaps two to one." And then he goes on, plaintively, to say, "Only a leader is needed!" It occurs to me that a man who can produce 20,000,000 conservatives out of thin air ought to be able to scare up just one more, out of the same illimitable element, to lead them.

The letters of thousands of liberal Republicans are eloquent and convincing evidence that Mr. Sullivan's claim of an all-conservative Republican Party is fantastic and absurd. There are, as a matter of fact, millions of liberals in both political parties, and I am inclined to believe that they constitute an actual majority not merely in the Democratic but also in the Republican Party. If that is true, why is there any reason or necessity, it may properly be asked, for the creation of a new liberal party? Why is it not possible and logical for the liberals in at least one of these old political organizations to dominate it, and make it over into a truly progressive and wholly liberal party? There are, it seems to me, valid and compelling reasons why this is difficult if not impossible, and in any event inexpedient.

In the case of the Republican Party, the reactionary Old Guard elements are firmly intrenched in the control of the national and most of the State organizations. It would take far more time and energy to drive them out of control and out of the party than it would to build a new liberal party. Nearly all of the millions of liberals who still remain with the Republican Party feel that way about it. They remain in the Republican Party simply because they believe in *efficient liberalism,* and they have no confidence in either the efficiency or the liberalism of the Democratic Party. If the opportunity of joining a competent liberal party should be afforded them, these millions of voters would desert the Republican ranks tomorrow.

When we come to a consideration of the possible conversion of the Democratic Party into the real liberal party of the nation, we find there are four serious obstacles. First comes the Solid South, an impenetrable, unchangeable conservative bloc, the elimination of which from the Democratic Party is unthinkable, and along with it a group of Democratic big business men, Democratic bankers, and Democratic capitalists which is every bit as conservative and fully as large and powerful as the analogous group that constitutes the conservative wing of the Republican Party. Second, there is the old populist, inflationist, quack-remedy element which is stronger today in numbers and influence in the Democratic Party than since the days of Bryan. A liberal party that undertakes a more equitable distribution of the wealth and production of the country must have sound and able economic leadership; it cannot allow the

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financial witch doctors and their followers any part in its program. Third, the Democratic Party is rapidly becoming a national Tammany Hall, attacking and breaking down the merit system everywhere, demoralizing the public service, creating a vast bureaucracy for partisan ends. Can a truly liberal party tolerate and make use of such instrumentalities for the achievement of its high purposes? The fourth and greatest obstacle to the complete liberalization of the Democratic Party is Franklin D. Roosevelt. He is well aware that the Democratic Party is normally the minority party, that only by retaining his hold upon both conservatives and liberals can he hope to remain in power. Thus he is found in first one camp and then the other or on the fence between them and, sometimes, with his marvelous mental and political agility, in all three positions at once! As long as he is in control of the Democratic Party it will remain partly conservative and partly liberal, with a little benevolent fascism thrown in—in a word, the Roosevelt Party.

What then remains? I propose the creation of a united liberal party. I am fully aware of the stock arguments against the formation of a new party. I have no illusions as to the difficulties involved. But I believe that there has never before been so appropriate a time, so favorable an opportunity, for the creation of a liberal party. The cause of true liberalism is not adequately served by either of the major parties. Millions of men and women are ready for a new liberal alignment. A great issue is at hand, just as there was at the birth of the Republican Party. The great issue of this day is distribution—a better distribution of freedom, security, equality, and opportunity—a more thoroughgoing distribution, with all that it implies, than either the Republican or the Democratic Party is prepared to advocate or is capable of carrying through.

Now is the time to formulate a new bill of human rights and a simple, practical, liberal program, to organize State by State, using existing national or local liberal groups as a nucleus, and then put up a ticket and win or lose in 1936, but *win* in 1940!

Where do you stand on this question of a united liberal party?

MARK GRANITE

A Letter from Mr. Fraenkel

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

In your editorial on the Scottsboro case in your issue of November 28 you asked me for an answer to three questions:

1. You ask why it was necessary to wait until February 24 to begin preparation of the bill of exceptions. No work was done in the preparation of the bills of exceptions before that time because it was believed by all persons connected with the case that there was no necessity for so doing. Under the Alabama law the bill of exceptions might be filed ninety days after the denial of a motion for a new trial. That the motion for a new trial might be stricken despite the assurance of the judge that the defense had thirty days in which to file the same, despite the acquiescence of the Attorney General in that suggestion, despite two adjournments granted by the court without protest from the Attorney General, occurred to no one. Of course, the Alabama court in sustaining the action of the judge failed to mention any of the foregoing facts. The time between the receipt of the stenographer's minutes (very late in January) and the date set for the argument of the motion for a new trial was occupied in an analysis of the testimony and preparation of the brief for use on the motion. The same practice had been followed in the spring before Judge Horton.

2. You ask whether it would not have been advisable to begin preparation of these papers in time for any possible emergency and suggest that the court had not exhibited any partiality toward the defense. No one expected the court to do the defense any favors. No one, however, suspected that the court would trick the defense into losing a valuable right and that the Attorney General would be a party to it. The Attorney General had been present in court when the thirty-day time was allowed, and had made no protest. He received copies of the motion papers and retained them, without protest. He made no objection to the two adjournments which were granted. By all the rules of fair practice he should have been precluded from making the motion to strike.

3. You ask why an attempt was made to get the papers down on March 1 if the date had no real significance. Where the denial of the motion for a new trial is not the controlling date the entry of judgment of conviction is such date. In this case the Attorney General had, in writing, at the time he moved to strike out the motion for a new trial, recited that judgment had been entered on December 6. After the motion was stricken I examined the docket entries in the clerk's office in Decatur. I believed from the examination of these docket entries that judgment had been entered on the sixth, as formally stated by the Attorney General himself. I hastened to New York immediately after the conclusion of the argument for a new trial for the purpose of completing the bill of exceptions, and, indeed, started working thereon immediately upon boarding the train.

When I reported to colleagues in New York how we had been tricked by Judge Callahan so far as the motion for a new trial was concerned, and then emphasized the shortness of time left within which to get the bills of exceptions filed, one of them suggested that the Alabama authorities might try to shorten the time within which to file the bills of exceptions, just as they had shortened the time within which the motion for a new trial had to be filed; this remark determined me to try and file the bills of exceptions within ninety days from the dates of the verdicts, because I assumed that they could not pick any earlier date—in the Patterson case the ninety days from verdict expired on March 1, in the Norris case on March 6.

As a result of effort on the part of a large number of persons and three printing plants, the Patterson bill of exceptions was actually put on a plane at the Newark airport on February 28, and would, in the ordinary course of events, have been filed on March 1. To meet the plane I had an attorney stationed at the airport in Birmingham. The plane never reached Birmingham, having crashed on the way. I was not at that time, however, unduly disturbed by this misadventure because I believed then, as I do now, that judgment had been entered on the sixth and that the declaration of the Attorney General to that effect would be considered final in any court of justice.

Here again no objection was made by the Attorney General to the filing of the bill of exceptions, a copy of which was served upon him, or to the setting of the case for argument. For the first time a few minutes before the commencement of the argument in Montgomery the Attorney General served a notice that he was going to strike the bill of exceptions. His claim was then that judgment of conviction had been entered at the time of the rendition of the verdict, on December 1. I argued to the court that it would be unjust and improper to permit him to make that contention when in his written motion he had declared otherwise, that the judgment was entered on December 6. In its opinion the Alabama Supreme Court ruled that the date of verdict did not control, but stated without further discussion that judgment had been entered on December 1 and in no way referred to the Attorney General's recital to the contrary.

I am astonished that you should have passed over these matters without a criticism of the unfair action of the Alabama courts and the Attorney General of that State.

New York, November 23 OSMUND K. FRAENKEL

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Taxing New York City

To the Editors of The Nation:

I have just read the article on Local Finance in *The Nation* for November 21, and I desire to bring to your attention our proposed solutions for one of the most hotly debated local taxation problems in recent years—that of raising funds to finance unemployment relief in New York City.

The Citizens' Conference on Unemployment, which is composed of representatives from trade unions, settlement houses, civic and church groups, educators as well as unemployed, met in October and adopted a clear-cut tax program to raise the $50,000,000 to $70,000,000 a year required from New York City. It was our first assumption that this money should be raised from those able to pay, and a general principle was adopted excluding from payment persons with an income of less than $5,000 yearly. The taxing plans offered by the business interests are in sharp contrast—they propose taxes on subway fares, on sales, and on wages, which would draw the money from the lower income groups, even from the unemployed themselves. It was our belief that a representative group such as ours should serve to mobilize public opinion around an equitable tax program that would command the support of the majority of people of the city. We proposed therefore to back the following taxes:

1. In addition to the tax bill signed by Mayor LaGuardia calling for 15 per cent of the amounts paid on the federal income tax, another 15 per cent should be levied on the tax paid by all persons subject to the State income tax, with exemption for incomes of less than $5,000 yearly. This tax plus the bill already signed by the Mayor should yield about $25,000,000 yearly.

2. In addition to the 1 per cent tax on gross receipts of public utilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission (gas, steam, electric light, and telephone companies) a tax of 4½ per cent on gross receipts should be levied. This would provide about $18,000,000 yearly.

3. A tax of 4½ per cent on the net profits of corporations doing business in the city. The State now levies such a tax; the city should require corporations making a return to the State to file a similar return for the city. This tax should yield from $20,000,000 to $25,000,000 yearly.

4. A tax of 4½ per cent on the profits of commercial banks doing business in the city. This tax is made possible if the 4½ per cent tax is levied by the city on corporations. Based on a similar tax levied by the State it should yield $9,000,000 yearly.

Since the confusion on a tax program becomes greater and greater at City Hall, the need for the general public to organize behind a program of its own becomes urgent. All individuals or organizations who can support our program in whole or in principle can secure an indorsement blank by writing for it to the Citizens' Conference on Unemployment, 112 East Nineteenth Street.

New York, November 20 David Lasser, Secretary

The Road to Relief

To the Editors of The Nation:

I am one among an army of forgotten men who are silently but desperately watching the tide of economic annihilation creeping inexorably toward our last place of refuge. As yet we have too much wealth to be admitted to free relief. We still have a little property, a few dollars on a savings account, visible and concrete fruits of our frugality. At one time, not so long ago, we were told "that frugal living, industry, and thrift were sterling virtues worthy of cultivation." We now discover that the vaunted fruits thereof are obstacles on our path to free relief and a place on society's welfare rolls. We must first exhaust every fund we have laid away to stave off poverty and want, and the various welfare agencies by their very rules and tactics hasten the end.

Consider our case. We are construction men. For years we have been engaged in building churches, schools, hospitals, homes, factories, and the temples of big business. The depression has all but wiped us out; from one of the nation's commanding industries construction has dwindled to a mere dot on the economic chart. Renovizing campaigns, remodeling spurts have been born with great fanfares of ballyhoo to resurrect our industry, but to what avail? Hardly a job, barely a dollar does it bring to a carpenter or a mason except those who are on relief. Patriotic (?) citizens who must have urgent repairs made call the social-welfare agencies and their call for men is soon answered with men taken from the rolls. They are usually underpaid and sometimes only half paid, and if they protest they are told that they "should be grateful that they were taken off relief." Their benefactors are not aware of the fact that these men cannot go back on relief again until these meager wages are gone and another roll of red tape is unwound. That is one reason why a great many persons now receiving aid do not care to accept a short-time job. They know from bitter experience the long road they must travel to get back on relief.

Grand Rapids, Mich., October 2 Roland A. Beens

Harvard and Hanfstängl

To the Editors of The Nation:

The National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners has supplied me with the following information:

> On Thursday, June 22, a peaceful demonstration was held in Harvard Square protesting against the presence of Ernst Hanfstängl at Harvard. During the demonstration, seven young students and workers were arrested and charged with "disturbing the peace" and "speaking

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without a permit." Each of the defendants was sentenced to thirty days in the House of Correction on the charge of disturbing the peace, and $5 fine for speaking without a permit, or six months' suspended sentences on both counts.

The cases were appealed. On October 23 a Middlesex Superior Criminal Court jury reaffirmed the lower court's decision, and Judge George James, "as a warning to others of their kind and class," increased sentence to six months in the House of Correction, and $20 fine for all seven defendants.

District Attorney Warren L. Bishop referred to the defendants as "half-baked, would-be patriots . . . more interested in the government of Germany than in that of our own country." He proposed that stiffer sentences be given them "as a warning to others of their kind that this brand of bolshevism will not be tolerated in this country."

The defendants are Timothy Burr, aged twenty-one; Sarah Barr, twenty-six; Joseph Jacobs, twenty-one; Arvid Johnson, twenty-five; John Lamphier, twenty; Irvin Miller, twenty-eight; Joseph Dauber, twenty-five. All of them are already serving their terms.

This case serves as a striking contrast to President Conant's recent refusal to accept Hanfstängel's gift of a fellowship to Harvard, as a gesture to indicate the attitude of Harvard toward the present condition of German universities and the example Germany has set the world. It might be of some service to the future existence of free speech and free assembly in this country if all interested persons, and particularly graduates and undergraduates of Harvard University, were to make their views clear in this case. Letters respectfully calling the attention of President Conant to it might do some good.

New York, November 15 LINCOLN KIRSTEIN,
Harvard 1930

Christmas in Prison

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

At Sing Sing, in San Quentin, in Fulton Tower Prison, on the Georgia chain gangs, and in other penitentiaries and jails throughout the United States hundreds of innocent men are enduring years of heart-breaking confinement for crimes they did not commit. These men are political prisoners. Such fantastic charges as "criminal syndicalism," "sedition," and "inciting to riot" have been used by bitterly prejudiced judges and juries to put them behind bars.

When these men are sent to prison it is not they alone who suffer; their wives and children are left in destitution and want. It is the function of the Prisoners' Relief Fund of the International Labor Defense to send each political prisoner and each family of a prisoner a small monthly allowance. The following quotations from letters we have received indicate the manner in which our efforts are appreciated: "I surely don't want to face starvation like I did last winter, before I heard from you people." . . . "I tried to get help from the government relief, but I did not get anything but hard words. But when I think back over all you have done for us I feel happy as can be." . . . "I was so glad of the three dollars you sent till I had to write you all a few lines to let you know how glad I was." . . . "What a great surprise and yet such a pleasant one was your letter and the five dollars."

The Prisoners' Relief Fund is conducting a Christmas drive for funds for political prisoners and their families. These men have gone to jail because they tried to improve the lot of all of us. Help us help them and their families. Send a contribution to the Prisoners' Relief Fund of the International Labor Defense, 80 East Eleventh Street, New York City.

New York, November 23 ROSE BARON, Secretary

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Labor and Industry

Socialism's New Beginnings

By JOSEPH P. LASH

THE world Socialist movement has been going through the severest crisis in its history. For five years, since the beginning of the depression, it has desperately been trying to conserve the gains won through a half-century of working-class struggle. Despairingly the Labor and Socialist International has watched the daily sapping of the morale of its rank and file. Everywhere it has seen its grand victories—in the field of trade-union and political rights, social services, and decent wages—challenged by a capitalist offensive motivated by a self-interest as urgent as that which animates the workers. In Belgium the Socialist Parti Ouvrier Belge, which had 70 deputies out of 180 in Parliament in 1919, now has 73. In England and France the non-Socialist parties have consolidated into governments of national union. Most tragic of all has been the triumph of fascism, accompanied by universal trade-union retreat, disruption, and demoralization. Today there is emerging in several sections of the Labor and Socialist International a revitalized set of working-class demands in the form of concrete plans for solving the crisis—plans which focus around the socialization of credit and of those basic industries which would give a Socialist government sufficient leverage to introduce a planned economy in the interest of the workers. The Plan du Travail in Belgium, the program of the Socialist League in England, the new program of the Polish Bund, the program of Socialist construction of the Neu Beginnen Socialists in Germany, the Constructive Revolution group in France, all have remarkable similarities and seem to be achieving the unification of the most divergent right and left groups within the various Socialist parties.

England

After the débâcle of the English Labor Party in 1931, a group of the most capable intellectuals in the movement, under the leadership of Frank Wise, formed the Socialist League, which aimed by a vigorous program of pamphleteering and discussion to change the orientation of the party. Among the charter pamphleteers of the league were Sir Stafford Cripps, Sir Charles Trevelyan, Harold Laski, G. D. H. Cole, and R. H. Tawney. To belong to the league, one had to be a member of the Labor Party. The Socialist League set out through its pamphlets to remove the convenient ambiguity from the word socialism, which heretofore had promised all things to all men and had committed Labor Ministers and M. P.'s to nothing. The traditional program of the Labor Party contained long sections on its plans for alleviating distress and improving social conditions which were entirely unrelated to other sections dealing with the transfer of economic power. The transfer of power, the Socialist League pointed out, was obviously of first importance. Social reforms would naturally follow socialization of the banks and the key industries. The Socialist League succeeded in establishing in the public consciousness the necessity for priority of legislation essential to socialism.

The question of procedure naturally arose. Let us assume that a Labor majority will be compelled by popular pressure to push legislation for the socialization of the Bank of England and certain basic industries such as mining and transport. Unquestionably the Lords will block such legislation. Will the king then create the Labor peers upon which the passage of the legislation will depend? If the king refuses to do its bidding, the Labor Cabinet can immediately resign and go to the country on the issue, in which event the king might call in a leader of the Conservatives who would set up a government supported by the armed forces, that is, a dictatorship; or the Cabinet can itself continue unconstitutionally in office, disregarding the House of Lords—in other words, set up a dictatorship of its own. The Socialist League at least opened the eyes of the party membership to the alternatives.

The growth of the league in influence and numbers was phenomenal. Its prestige became so great that the most opportunist trade-union leaders considered it politically advantageous to be identified with it. And it was everywhere agreed that the next Labor Prime Minister as well as a good many members of the Cabinet would come from among the league's leaders. One is justified in saying that in the dark days after MacDonald's desertion the Socialist League held the party together, and its ideas almost became those of the majority. Today, on the eve of another general election, with prospects favorable to Labor, the trade-union leaders no longer fear the league. The violent barrage of the Conservative press against the league and its chief spokesman, Cripps, has had its effect. The recent Trades Union Congress repudiated last year's resolution in favor of a general strike in case of war—one of the league's great victories. The Southport Conference of the Labor Party in October produced the same old blanket program.

France

In France the united-front pact between the Socialists and Communists has converted the workers and peasants into an aggressive fighting force which is giving no rest to the various fascist bands, chiefly concentrated in Paris but now and then venturing into the republican provinces. This united front became possible following certain significant shifts in the Communist attitude, namely: (1) the decision that it was not temporizing with Social Democracy to treat for united action with the recognized leadership of the Socialists; and (2) that it was the job of Communists to defend democracy, yes, bourgeois democracy, which at least allowed the workers to organize and agitate.

Now that the united front has been established, the concern of the young Socialist leaders is for a positive plan, like the Belgian Plan du Travail, with which to go to the electorate. The powerful Constructive Revolution group is publishing a series of studies, analogous to those of the Socialist League, which examine the key positions in the French economy and propose blueprints for taking them over. Will the Communists support a program which involves gradual

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socialization rather than outright expropriation? The decision of the Communists to support Socialist candidates and even to withdraw in favor of Radical Socialists, indicates that they may. On this issue hinges the permanence of the united front in France. Whether the plan could be put in operation peacefully depends of course on the tactics of the opposition. The French Socialists and Communists are preparing for any eventuality.

Germany

The work of the Neu Beginnen in Germany has provoked great interest in Europe. It is almost completely an outgrowth of conditions under Hitler, and therefore would seem to represent a much more realistic response to the needs of the hour than the present policies of the remnants of the old party organizations. Its members are mostly between twenty and thirty years of age, and it follows tactics very different from those of other groups, paying great attention to theoretical position and conspiratorial technique. It is unpretentious in its claims and refuses to make martyrs out of its adherents. It has had less than ten casualties.

Unlike both the Prague Socialists and the Communist Party the Neu Beginnen group of Socialists believes that the fascist regime will be maintained for a long time regardless of what may happen to individuals within the regime. That being so, they are not interested in making great displays of public activity involving needless heroism and sacrifices, such as launching posters and handbills at meetings, shouting revolutionary slogans in the streets, calling on the workers to demonstrate on May Day, and so on. Their three immediate objectives indicate the methodical and thorough way in which they have set about their tremendous job: (1) complete and honest discussions in all sympathetic groups of what has happened in Germany since the advent of fascism with a view to showing that it was not a failure of Marxism that brought Hitler to power but failure of the Communist and Socialist parties, that Marxism still provides the only coherent and realistic method of analyzing what is to be done; (2) the development of a system of spreading inside and outside Germany news of what is going on, in order to break down the isolation created by a censored press and radio; (3) the creation of a disciplined, conspiratorial organization that will be proof against the manifold informers, secret police, S. A.'s, and other fascist groups.

The Neu Beginnen Socialists have initiated a series of discussions around their brochure of the same name. This document has been called the first real contribution to Marxist doctrine since the great polemics of the pre-war era. It has been translated into English and Flemish and is now being done in French by Bracke, the translator of Engels. Its analysis of the causes and tragic consequences of the disunity in the German working class has brought many recruits from the official Communists as well as from the Socialist Workers' Party (S. A. P.) and the Communist Party Opposition (K. P. O.). The program tentatively formulated in the brochure, "Neu Beginnen," looks toward revolutionary seizure of power followed by the installation of a "mixed economy" of socialism and capitalism. It is very significant that this underground group, all of whose members are actually *in* Germany, should arrive independently at the idea of a mixed economy. They declare that it would be the job of a workers' democracy set up by a Socialist Party in Germany to undertake Socialist construction side by side with private capitalist undertakings, "for only in this way can a check be kept on the productivity of state enterprises, and only in this way will the initiative of private entrepreneurs set the pace in insuring economy of labor in state concerns." What is necessary, they insist, and what Social Democracy lacked in Germany, was a real, clear conception of a Socialist system and the path to it.

Belgium

It is in Belgium that the new tendency in world social democracy will receive its first test, for the Plan du Travail is the official program of the Belgian Labor Party. Only recently the Belgian Socialists turned down invitations to participate in the government because their would-be collaborators would not accept the Plan as the new government policy. The Parti Ouvrier Belge (P. O. B.) is a strong party commanding 37 per cent of the votes. In every Belgian city and commune its cooperative factories, stores, and cafes are among the largest and most prosperous, its six dailies among the most widely read, its Peoples' Houses the centers of communal life. Its trade unions embrace the whole working-class population. In spite of these facts the P. O. B. since the war has made almost no headway, gaining only 1 per cent of the total vote during that time; but the adoption at its last congress of the Plan du Travail by a vote of 563,451 against 8,500 abstentions has unquestionably revived the morale of the Belgian working class. The party's hope of putting through the essential measures by a parliamentary majority seems too optimistic, and the question arises whether its control of the nationalized credit institutions and monopoly industries will not be subject to the same corruption as our public-service commissions. Moreover, it is disarming the workers not to prepare them for the concerted attack of the Catholic church, the Crown, the press, and the General Staff at the crucial moment. But the Plan has succeeded in again rallying the workers for an aggressive struggle, a task which the Belgian Communist Party with its more revolutionary program was unable to accomplish.

Henri de Man

While most of these plans were developed independently, it is Henri de Man, vice-chairman of the Belgian Socialist Party and author of its Plan du Travail, who by his writings has promoted *planisme* to the level of a significant ideological force within the labor and Socialist movement. Henri de Man is a brilliant, heterodox thinker, as evidenced by the fact that he had the presumption to write a book entitled "Au dela du Marxisme." Until Hitler's advent to power he taught at the University of Frankfort, thereafter returning to Belgium. In Germany he had been tragically impressed with the failure of the Social Democrats to present a program that addressed itself to the causes rather than to the surface consequences of fascism. The German Socialists went into coalitions with the bourgeois parties to defend democracy when democracy was fundamentally imperiled by the economic crisis which the parliamentary groups of the different parties were unable to end. They formed the association of the Reichsbanner to defend the party against the Storm Troops, though this organization was recruited from the vast reservoir of unemployed youth. An attack upon fascism, De Man declared, as a defense against the erosion that

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was taking place in the workers' movements everywhere, had to be a frontal attack upon the central position of capitalism —namely, the credit system and the basic monopoly industries—with a view to installing a planned economy. Such an attack was particularly opportune in a period of capitalist crisis, when capitalism's absurdities and contradictions were most glaringly evident.

On the other hand, it was suicidal for socialism to adhere to the old program of increased wages, social services, and so on. Such a program no longer rallied the working class and was bitterly fought by industry. De Man differentiates between reforms of partition and reforms of structure. The former were the kind successfully fought for during the last half-century of the Socialist movement. They involved a redistribution of the national income which it is futile to demand in a period of decreasing national income such as the present. On the other hand, reforms of structure achieve the same ends by changing the national economy in such a way as again to increase the national income. The contention of De Man and his followers is that a planned economy achieved through the socialization of credit and basic monopoly industry, plus the control the state already has over fiscal and wage policies, exports and imports, will enable the adaptation of production to consumption, the reabsorption of workers, and an increase in the volume of internal business in Belgium by over 50 per cent within three years.

Socialist parties have from their beginning paid lip-service to the notion of complete and blanket socialization. But these parties have never set about to introduce structural changes in capitalism, in other words, to socialize. The Socialist state became, like the City of God, a remote unrealizable idea, while the movement accommodated itself to the exigencies of a capitalist world. The plans again give meaning and vitality to the Socialist section of the program by subordinating everything else to an effort to capture the key positions of modern capitalism, credit and monopoly.

The Mixed Economy

The objectives of the various plans may be stated as follows: (1) immediate transfer to Socialist control of the key positions of capitalist society over a wide enough field to enable Socialist policy to control all major industries and services; (2) the maintenance of capitalist industries under orders dictated by the requirements of a nation-wide Socialist economic plan. Such a scheme envisions the existence side by side of capitalist and Socialist sectors of industry. In the first place, the plans assure the person who combines ownership and use, such as the small farmer, the shopkeeper, and the artisan, of the inviolability of his property. In the second place, the plans do not propose to socialize those manifold industries in which the highest productivity and cheapness is still best assured by the checks and balances inherent in competition. This notion of a mixed economy has been incorporated in all the plans in the hope that it will bring new middle-class allies to the proletariat. The plans, and especially the idea of mixed economy, have already been attacked by the Comintern as Social Democracy's latest fraud upon the workers, designed at this particular time to dam the "great" flow of Socialists to the Comintern. However, it should be pointed out that mixed economy is but an adaptation of Lenin's N. E. P.

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Books, Drama, Films

Remembrance of Proust

Remembrance of Things Past. By Marcel Proust. With an Introduction by Joseph Wood Krutch. Random House. Four Volumes. $12.50.

THIS reprint in four durable volumes of the great novel which it took three American publishers ten years to issue in eleven volumes is only the first of many monuments which will be erected to the memory of Marcel Proust. The angel Time with whom Proust wrestled can be counted on, I think, to recognize a worthy foe and to deal handsomely with him. Yet enough years have elapsed since his death, and since the publication in this country of "Swann's Way," to make some sort of perspective possible and to put some meaning into a question which could scarcely have been asked twelve years ago: namely, *how* great is Proust, or if one prefers, *how* long will he last?

Not quite forever, I should say. It suddenly occurs to me, now that the work has receded some years into my own past, that it is indeed past; and I find it strangely possible to imagine a future age when it will have little of the fascination and the reality which it has had for me and which it will continue to have, of course, for a great many readers still to come.

In the long run it may appear to have been unfortunate that Proust was so entirely occupied with Time, since Time in all probability takes a particular pleasure in defeating those writers who give him the Lie Direct, who wrestle with him and for the moment seem to win. Proust already seems to me to have lost something by the match. Time, even while he wrestles, wears a veil, and not a few shreds of that impalpable but obscuring fabric cling here and there to "Remembrance of Things Past." Proust set out, he says, to recover a world which Time had begun to obliterate. But in process of doing so he came to understand his enemy too well—exactly how well Mr. Krutch's compact and beautiful introduction to this edition makes very clear. He advanced so far into Time's territory, and maneuvered there so long, that he came back with patches of mist and mildew on him; he had accommodated himself to clouds. Another masterpiece of our day, Mann's "Magic Mountain," suffers a little from the same malady. Neither Proust nor Mann will seem in another century, I think, to have gained anything by being so subtle concerning the theme of Time. Rather they will seem to have lost, to have been in a measure submerged; and this has not happened, so far as I know, to certain masters of narrative—Homer, Fielding, and Tolstoy—who wrote ever so less subtly and self-consciously, who had no theories about our common enemy, who hardly glanced at him, indeed, as they moved down the main highway of experience, but who were indubitably much greater men.

Proust was a very wonderful man in his way, but he was also very small, and I fear that this will be another count against him. He, like his hero, was preposterously, insufferably, spoiled; and while a thoroughly spoiled person may be wise sometimes almost beyond license, may see a million things which others do not see, he can seldom be credited with that kind of knowledge—not a knowledge of the nerves merely—which in the greatest books seems to carry the whole world on its shoulders. Mr. Krutch is right in saying that Proust gives us *a* world. But Proust does not give us *the* world. It is perhaps significant that Combray, Balbec, and Paris are presented to us through a hero who spends most of his time in bed, with three women—his mother, his grandmother, and Françoise—always there to caress him and indulge him, to kiss him goodnight, to draw his curtains in the morning, to roast him a delicious fowl when he is hungry, and to tiptoe out of hearing when he wants to think. Even as the lover of Albertine he keeps to his bed—not theirs but his—and receives her according to whatever mood dominates him by chance. It is undeniably *a* world which we perceive past his pillows; it is a world which he knows and can discuss with marvelous minuteness, and it is one from which we can learn a great deal, for not the least of Proust's glories is that his book abounds with observations that are absolutely true as far as they go. It is obviously, however, not *the* world. To the objection that there is no such place I would simply answer that there is a kind of novelist who makes us think there is. To the objection that no other modern novelist has done this I would make no answer, for it is true; as it is true that Proust is clearly the best of all modern novelists. Why our vision has ceased to be complete—well, that is another question, not to be confused with the question whether completeness is not better than incompleteness.

Even Proust's people are incomplete. They are consistent, they are differentiated from one another with an unexampled delicacy, and they have their fascination. But the illusion is not of bones and blood. They are the most perfectly fashioned dolls in fiction, but they are dolls. I find this true not only of Albertine and Saint-Loup, both of whom, despite the attention lavished upon them, are failures in characterization, but of the famous successes—M. de Charlus, Swann, Odette, the Duchesse de Guermantes, M. de Norpois, the Marquise de Villeparisis, Françoise, and Marcel's grandmother. It is not that these people are thinly characterized; it is that they in themselves are thin—are not quite big enough somehow for one of the most skilful novelists ever born to have been forced to exercise his fine brain and his almost perfect art upon. They are not to be loved or feared; they are merely to be admired as creations—which is not what we say of Odysseus, Squire Western, and Pierre Bezúkhov.

This minority report is probably premature and very likely wrong. But it is all that one devoted reader of Proust, remembering him after several years, could find to say. To that reader "Remembrance of Things Past" appears now, in a word, both wonderful and trivial, both mammoth and minor.

MARK VAN DOREN

The Twilight of the New Deal

America's Hour of Decision. By Glenn Frank. Whittlesey House. $2.50.

New Frontiers. By Henry Wallace. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.

The New Democracy. By Harold L. Ickes. W. W. Norton and Company. $1.50.

The New Deal in Action. By Schuyler C. Wallace. Harper and Brothers. $2.

Beyond the New Deal. By David Lawrence. Whittlesey House. $2.50.

IT is a fact well known to students of medieval history that the papal pretensions to power and glory reached their climax on the eve of the collapse of the supremacy of the medieval church. Perhaps a simpler illustration of this mental mechanism is that of a boy whistling in the dark to keep up his courage. Similarly, the apostles of the New Deal appear most vocal and confident at the moment in which it is going on the rocks.

It may seem strange to make such a statement as this on the heels of an election which gave Mr. Roosevelt an apparent vote of confidence unprecedented in American history. Unfortu-

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nately, however, the splendor of his political triumph is only exceeded by the abysmal failure of his economic program to date. Only a few days before the election John T. Flynn, probably the most competent and unbiased writer on current economic problems in America, exposed with great clarity and convincingness in *Common Sense* the economic bankruptcy of the New Deal, with only inflation standing between it and an ignominious termination.

Glenn Frank, of course, is not a professional New Dealer. Rather he is a professional liberal of the new school, and perhaps the most talented word painter and phrase architect of the whole group. The essence of his book is the familiar liberal theme that the world is in a bad way and that we must reform or face revolution. If liberalism still has any virtues, Mr. Frank's book is probably better calculated to win converts for the cause than any other publication of recent months.

The liberal philosophy, unfortunately, rests upon the assumption that the capitalist leopard will change its spots. For such a hope, however, the evidence becomes daily less voluminous and convincing. This contradiction is extremely apparent in Mr. Frank's book. In one place he points out that private initiative in American business has been so stupid as to make it seem as though it is literally determined to commit suicide. Yet a few pages farther on he expresses himself as believing that under this same private enterprise "the United States has the chance to evolve a sounder relation between politics and economics than either the communism or fascism of the hour can possibly achieve." Just why the devil of private enterprise of pre-1929 vintage can be expected to become the economic savior in 1934 Mr. Frank nowhere takes the trouble to explain.

Specifically, Mr. Frank's remedy is to appeal to the intelligent self-interest of the masters of American finance and industry. If our financial and industrial overlords were capable of intelligent self-interest, any such appeal would be unnecessary. Enlightened selfishness could save American capitalism for a generation. It is the absence of such a quality which has brought us into our present mess. Finance is busily devoted to destroying industry, and industry with equal stupidity is throttling and impoverishing the salaried classes, laborers, and farmers who must buy the product of industry if capitalism is to survive.

Secretary Wallace's book has been described as "the gospel of the New Deal." It is certainly the finest sermon which has emerged from the Roosevelt Administration, not even excepting the best speeches of the President himself. Indeed, it is probably the best piece of liberal idealizing since Woodrow Wilson's "The New Freedom." It is literally an inspired argument for the necessity of the new attitude toward economic problems, and, in particular, a splendid analysis of the depression of American agricultural life under finance capitalism.

Much as one may admire Mr. Wallace's spirit, one can hardly overlook the notorious absurdities which have pervaded the Department of Agriculture under his administration. We have witnessed the restriction of food production at a time when tens of millions of Americans are hungry and when other tens of millions cannot afford a normal diet. In their recent important book on "America's Capacity to Consume," Messrs. Leven, Moulton, and Warburton have pointed out that even in 1929 three-fourths of the non-rural American families did not have enough income "to provide an adequate diet at moderate cost," while nine-tenths of the non-rural population lacked the income to be able to provide themselves with a liberal diet. A man of Mr. Wallace's high-mindedness should have resigned rather than allow his name to be tarnished by association with such a policy as the limitation of the production of foodstuffs, and it is especially to be regretted that he presumes to defend it in his book. His well-known argument for lower tariffs is only an escape mechanism and an evasion. He is sufficiently intelligent and well informed to know that the only real answer to the farm problem is greater industrial employment and higher wages and salaries.

Mr. Wallace's colleague, Secretary Ickes, is somewhat less emotional and "spiritual," but his book provides just as effective an argument for a new dispensation in American economic life. He is excellent in his denunciation of the pirates and bourbons who were responsible for the collapse of 1929 and yet wish to drag us back under the dominion of the same ideas and policies which then wrecked the country. He is rather weaker when he tries to draw a lengthy distinction between "sound individualism" and "rugged individualism." It is high time that the whole conception of economic individualism should be abandoned. Mr. Ickes himself knows that there is no such thing as "good" individualism in this field, any more than there can be a good cancer or good cholera.

He tells us that the whole philosophy of the Roosevelt Administration is based upon "the greatest good for the greatest number." Farther on, he writes:

> In all the planning and coordinating that the government is doing and may do, it should be understood that the interests of no one group are being considered above those of others. Planning will be in behalf of the so-called working classes and of the industrialists, in the interest of the farmers and of the financiers, but for none to the exclusion of the others.

If Mr. Ickes really believes this he should take a vacation and give himself a chance to size up the whole situation. He has intelligence enough to make it probable that he would return with a rather different impression. The fact is that, whatever the intent, the Roosevelt policies have actually favored the "rich and the well-born" as definitely as did those of Mr. Hoover. The difference is that Mr. Roosevelt has been much more clever in the art of political deception. Indeed, he may have been so clever that he has actually deceived himself. The farmers have been thrown a certain trivial sop, which has been more than eaten up by the increase of industrial prices and the decrease in the purchasing power of labor. The rest of the important Administration policies have been a surrender to finance and business all along the line, with the consumer interests, especially, ignored or sacrificed. The most charitable interpretation of Mr. Ickes is that he is an honest man whose proverbial industriousness has led to such an absorption in his job that he has been unable to see the New Deal in its true perspective.

Professor Wallace has written what is easily the best introductory description of the machinery of the New Deal. But if the book is an ideal description of the statics of the New Deal, not so much can be said for it as an analysis of its dynamics. The degree to which it falls down as a description of the New Deal "in action" can be discerned from the following paragraph:

> These, then, were the primary objectives of the National Industrial Recovery Act: the spreading of work among the adult unemployed through the elimination of child labor and a radical reduction of working hours; increasing the purchasing power of the masses through the establishment of minimum wages; the stimulation of labor-union organizations; the abolition of unfair competition among business men; and the introduction of at least a modicum of planning into industry.

A realistic account of the New Deal "in action" would have to point out that the Recovery Act has only very slightly increased employment; that it has secured very little in the way of a sweeping reduction of working hours; that the purchasing power of the masses has actually been lessened through the fact that prices have risen more rapidly than wages; that labor unionism has been reprehensibly betrayed, most notably of all by the "Assistant-President," Mr. Richberg himself; that unfair

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competition among business men has been increased in many ways as the result of the growing dominion of big business and monopoly at the expense of the small business man; and that the whole NRA is a surrender of American business to business control rather than a real establishment of economic planning under government control.

In spite of all this, a fair-minded man is likely to have a warm and genial feeling for Secretaries Wallace and Ickes before he reads very far in David Lawrence's sophisticated apology for the Morgan-Mellon system. The cornerstone of Mr. Lawrence's economic and political philosophy is the primary importance of vested wealth and the absolute security of private property. No type of reform should be permitted which in any way is likely to place these in jeopardy. Heavy and just taxation of great fortunes he brands as "the path of national suicide." There is a long and passionate polemic in behalf of the return to the gold standard, and there is a touching tribute to the sanctity of the Constitution. Mr. Lawrence will sanction some lowering of tariff walls but no flirtation with free trade. He relies for recovery in part upon the prospect of a rapid increase in American population, but he apparently has overlooked the work of the majority of the students of population in the last decade, who have shown that there is every probability that the American population will become stationary within less than fifty years and at a point not notably above our present population.

The New Deal is certainly near the end of its rope, with a possible inflation maneuver as its last resource. But this is something quite different from saying that Mr. Roosevelt has proved, or necessarily will prove, a failure. He may get wise to himself, get better advisers, and give us a "new deck" instead of a New Deal, which, as Henry Pratt Fairchild has pointed out, is the only hope of saving anything like the present American economic and social order—which means the only hope of ultimate success and historical vindication for Mr. Roosevelt. If he ever does take his own words at their face value and resolutely goes in for "the greatest good for the greatest number," his success will be as rapid and striking as has been the débâcle of the New Deal during the last eighteen months. And if he wishes a new Bible, we can think of nothing better to suggest than the above-mentioned work on "America's Capacity to Consume."

Capitalism never can work unless goods can be sold, and goods never can be sold in sufficient quantities unless the mass of Americans have the money to buy them with. This is an elementary truism which any clever teacher could put over in a kindergarten. It is not too much to ask that it should some day permeate our halls of statecraft.

HARRY ELMER BARNES

Jews in the U. S. S. R.

Where the Ghetto Ends: Jews in Soviet Russia. By Leon Dennen. Alfred King. $2.50.

LEON DENNEN, born in America, was brought up in Russia. He returned to this country when he was nineteen. Then, almost ten years later (1932-33), he went back to Russia, a new Russia, and traveled through it as a member of the staff of the Moscow *Daily News*. The life and place of the Jews under the Soviets were his primary concern, and the result of his travels is an interesting and very readable book.

He gives an account of his memories of oppression under the Czar and draws a picture, clear and sympathetic, of the regeneration in New Russia as it affects his race. He says that although the Jews as a whole had little to do with creating the revolution, they joined in it whole-heartedly afterward. Under Kerensky's regime Jews were allowed to work in factories and there they were inoculated with Communist ideals; Mr. Dennen traces, through short case histories, the Jews' new consciousness and outlook from then on.

He went to the Crimea, where 29,000 Jews, most of them Ghetto Jews, form a vast collective, living a hard and hardy life on the soil. This, to my mind, is the best part of the book, which is well written throughout. Here are vivid little stories of young and old, who have a healthy, purposeful enthusiasm and whose future, firmly linked with that of the U. S. S. R., appears vastly brighter than that of the Jews in Western Europe, to whom Mr. Dennen devotes his concluding chapters. "The path of the Jews under the Soviet regime," he says, "is straightforward and clear. It is the path of all Soviet citizens. . . . In the Soviet scheme of things the Jew is primarily a worker, farmer, artist, or poet."

There are brief chapters on the new Jewish woman in Russia, on old Jews in the Moscow synagogue, on young Jewish workers in Soviet industries, on the contribution of the Jews to Soviet literature and the theater, and on the future of the Jewish republic within the Soviet system. At the end of the book are thirty-two pages of reproductions of excellent photographs.

One criticism that I have of the book is that there is not enough of it. I have a feeling that it should have been twice as long as it is, and it is somewhat lacking in integration and depth. But it is a very worth-while volume which should be read by Jews and non-Jews alike.

LOUIS ADAMIC

Trevelyan's England

Anne of England. By M. R. Hopkinson. The Macmillan Company. $3.50.

England Under Queen Anne: The Peace and the Protestant Succession. G. M. Trevelyan. Longmans, Green and Company. $6.50.

EVERY historian has a purpose, and the myth of a "scientific" history means merely that in the pursuit of it he should not falsify facts or misquote documents. Mrs. Hopkinson's purpose is relatively harmless; she wishes merely to prove that Queen Anne was more intelligent and less easily dominated than has usually been supposed. This she fails to accomplish, since she is sufficiently honest to narrate facts which do not corroborate her own rather sentimental comments. She writes very clumsily, but her extensive quotations from contemporary letters and memoirists are often of considerable interest.

Professor Trevelyan is a more formidable person. Inheriting the Whig traditions both of his own family and of the Macaulays, he has set himself to find historical corroboration for the principles of English liberalism. His three-volume history of the reign of Anne, of which "The Peace and the Protestant Succession" is the final instalment, is intended to illustrate the English genius for tolerance and compromise, in contrast—as he explains occasionally—to the fascist tendencies of less gifted races, and to show how that genius earned its appropriate reward in the victory over France. It displays all the industrious research and the charm of style for which he is famous, and will doubtless give to the majority of its readers the impression which its author intended it to convey. It would be tempting merely to dismiss it with the remark that Professor Trevelyan's conception of history is already as anachronistic as that of Bossuet or St. Augustine, but unfortunately the political repercussions of books of this kind cannot be ignored. Its most obvious feature is its extraordinary glorification of the

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British army. Having chosen for his subject the most successful of all English wars, and for his hero the most successful of all English generals, Professor Trevelyan devotes no less than two-fifths of the entire work to a detailed narrative of the campaigns, fully illustrated with maps and plans. Certain members of the Trevelyan family have been prominent advocates of pacifism, but Professor Trevelyan, one must assume, approves of war as long as it is sufficiently glorious. As for the causes of all this carnage, one does hear, from time to time, of economic rivalries in America and in the East, but the center of the stage is always occupied by individual generals and statesmen who apparently represent not economic interests but political ideals; one is left with the impression that the main object of British policy was to claim the rewards which Providence had assigned to it and to vindicate eternal justice. The party conflicts which occupied the later years of the reign of Anne are treated in the same spirit. That the Whigs represented the mercantile interest and the Tories that of the landowners—a fact which neither party ever denied or wished to deny—Professor Trevelyan somewhat grudgingly admits; but for the most part the personages upon whom he lavishes his skill for character portrayal appear to be acting in an economic vacuum, peopled only by the myths of abstract political theory and by that guardian genius of the English race which sways all of them, Whig and Tory alike, to prefer the greatness of their country to personal ambition. Marlborough and Godolphin have been in their graves for two hundred years, but as long as labor governments have to be overthrown and colonies defended, the English ruling class, one realizes, will find it helpful to have them resuscitated.

H. B. Parkes

Shorter Notices

Collected Poems. By V. Sackville-West. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

Miss Sackville-West's long poem, The Land, is still her best poem, judging by the evidence of this volume. The shorter pieces in it, new or old, are scarcely better than Georgian trifles, but The Land has at least the advantage of an important and immemorial theme. If Miss Sackville-West has added little to what is already there, the reason may be simply that she is not a first-rate poet. It may also be, however, that she has compromised between Vergil, say, and Robert Frost. She prefixes some lines from the "Georgics" which Dryden has translated thus:

> Nor can I doubt what toil I must bestow,
> To raise my subject from a ground so low;
> And the mean matter, which my theme affords,
> To embellish with magnificence of words.

But that implies the grand style, and she has not adopted it. Neither has she been utterly colloquial and contemporary. The truth probably seemed to her to lie somewhere in between. If so, the poetry did not.

Dimitrov. A Biography. By Stella D. Blagoyeva. International Publishers. $1.25.

Of Gregori Dimitrov, the hero of the Reichstag-fire trial, much has been written. Of Dimitrov the man, of his mental, spiritual, and political development, this book gives us the first detailed and authentic description. For the world at large Dimitrov's existence began in the court at Leipzig. Yet he had been a well-known figure for years past in the revolutionary labor movement, a man whose courage and intelligence had won him respect and influence, especially among the Slavic races, and had made him a member of the executive committee of the Communist International. Unfortunately the author of this biography follows so slavishly the language and ideology of Communist Party literature, is so uncompromisingly the propagandist, that she fails to see behind her conception of Dimitrov as the "embodiment of the finest fighting qualities of those who are fighting for communism" the vibrant personality we learned to know and love from the contemporary reports and recent books on the Reichstag-fire episode. Her Dimitrov is the orthodox party man. The man who yearned over his comrades when they threatened to break beneath the browbeating attacks of the judges and the persecution, who understood them when they were weak and sympathized with them when they were discouraged—that Dimitrov eludes us in this one-sided portrayal. The full stenographic text of Dimitrov's great speech in court is a valuable addition to the volume.

The Art of Becoming a Mother: The Pregnant Woman. By Porter Brown. Eugenics Publishing Company. $2.

The purpose of this small book is a very worthy one—to give the pregnant woman a simple account of the process of child-bearing; the accomplishment is not too successful. The author does a great service in listing the misconceptions and superstitions about pregnancy which trouble even the intelligent mother. The detailed description of diet and medical problems will, however, only confuse the woman who may receive from her own physician instructions which, though similar in principle, may differ in application. The author would have done better to have limited himself entirely to a discussion of general principles which would have enabled the reader to understand the reasons for her physician's advice. The book contains so much of this confusing detail that the pregnant woman already under the care of a physician or clinic will have little use for it; the woman who is not under such care had better hurry and get a doctor.

Drama

The Heart of a Child

FOR two of its three acts "The Children's Hour" (Maxine Elliott Theater) is an unusually well-written play about one of the most vicious and hateful little girls ever known in literature or, I hope, in life. The darling of a doting grandmother, she has a genius far beyond her years for making everyone with whom she comes in contact miserable, and with the disinterested malice of an Iago she cajoles or threatens her way from one despicable triumph to another until she crowns her slighter achievements in the way of making other children wretched by the wreck of four adult lives. What is more, Florence McGee plays the role with such fiendish intensity that the spectator passes rapidly from the state where he is conscious of an overmastering desire personally to administer a beating, to the state where he is firmly convinced that capital punishment for children is an urgent social necessity.

So much for the first two acts, which end on a tense scene where the juvenile villain dramatically extricates herself from cross-questioning in an inquisition which is about to expose her, and once more wins her perverse success. Up to that point the play has not been pleasant but it has been powerful and increasingly gripping. There then follows a third act so strained, so improbable, and so thoroughly boring that the effect is almost completely destroyed, and one is left to wonder that anything so inept was ever allowed to reach production.

The situation is as follows: Mary Tilford, liar, cheat, and tyrant, has progressed in the art of trouble-making to the point where, in feigned innocence and terror, she has suggested a

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Lesbian relationship between the two proprietors of her school. All the pupils are withdrawn by horrified parents, and the physician fiance of one of the proprietors undertakes to expose the plotter. He almost succeeds, but the demon, blackmailing a schoolfellow, gets direct though perjured testimony, and ruin falls. Now the whole of the dramatic interest is centered upon the perverse child, and the only real concern of the audience is with her. At this point, however, she completely disappears from the play, and the indescribably tedious last act concerns itself exclusively with the two teachers—one of whom loses her fiance while the other commits suicide. The wonder is, not merely that this last act seems forced, improbable, and monotonous with a deliberate forcing of the cumulative woe, but that the play could have been rehearsed without someone's becoming aware that the third act was simply not the real conclusion of the play as previously developed. The character unceremoniously dropped is incomparably the realest and most vivid person in the play, as well as dramatically the center of the action. Moreover, all the real tension has developed around her, and the solution of the play lies inevitably in her fate. Emotions might have been released in one way if she had finally been defeated; another effect might have been achieved if she had herself been shown in a final vicious triumph. But the actual last act is merely corollary to the main action and leaves the audience cheated as well as bored.

Only one explanation, I think, is possible. The play must have begun as the story of two girls wrongly accused of Lesbian love. In the writing, what was originally intended as merely a device to precipitate the situation developed into the principal action without the author's becoming fully aware of the fact. Hence this author never noticed that the last act was the last act of the play as originally conceived instead of being, as it should have been, the last act of the play as actually written. Something of the sort happens fairly frequently in the theater, and obvious as the result is, neither author nor director seems always to be aware of it. Nor is that the only reason why the defect is worth pointing out. If the public does not respond to "The Children's Hour" it will be accused of an indifference to truth, power, and intelligence. I suspect, however, that a sound last act would have done wonders for the chances of a play which ought to succeed. JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Films

Effigy of a Lady

AS an attempt to supply a cinematic equivalent for the marmoreal prose of Gustave Flaubert the version of "Madame Bovary" at the Acme is not a great success. The trouble is not the usual one of a lack of honesty or artistic taste on the part of those responsible for the translation. Jean Renoir, who directed the film, reminds us time and again that he is the son of the great impressionist painter by the fine sense of pictorial design revealed throughout. An indirect shot of Rudolfe dressing before a mirror makes excellent use of the Ver Meer device of perspective within perspective; another shot of Emma and Charles entering their home immediately after their marriage is as austere an evocation of a provincial French street as any canvas by Utrillo or Vlaminck. The one example of symbolism—the bowed head of a drunken Pierrot in the foreground of the last meeting between Emma and Léon—is so perfectly integrated with both the formal and emotional unity of the scene as to be inconspicuous in itself. The nineteenth-century bourgeois décor is right to the last piece of bric-a-brac on the mantel; and the costumes have the air of really belonging

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D'OYLY CARTE GILBERT & SULLIVAN OPERAS
FROM SAVOY THEATRE, LONDON
ENGAGEMENT ENDS SAT., DEC. 15—REPERTORY for last 3 WEEKS
Wed. Night and Thurs. (Thanksgiving) Mat. 2:15 and Night—"Trrial by Jury" and "H. M. S. PINAFORE." Fri. and Sat. Nights and Sat. Mat.—"THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD."
WEEK DEC. 3—Mon. and Tues. Nights "PATIENCE." Wed. Mat. and Night and Thurs. and Fri. Nights—"THE MIKADO." Sat. Mat. and Night "Princess Ida." Final Week Dec. 10—Mon. and Tues. Nights—"Cox and Box" and "The Pirates of Penzance." Wed. Mat. and Wed. and Thurs. Nights "Iolanthe." Fri. and Sat. Nights and Sat. Mat. The Gondoliers."
MARTIN BECK THEATRE 45th Street West of 8th Avenue

OPENS MONDAY, EVE., DEC. 10th, at 8:45
THEATRE UNION'S NEW PLAY
SAILORS of CATTARO
A SWEEPING DRAMA OF LIFE IN THE CREW'S QUARTERS OF A BATTLESHIP
CIVIC REPERTORY THEATRE, 14th and 6th Ave.
Prices 30c to $1.50; no tax. Matinees Tues. and Sat. 2:45
For information on reduced rates for Benefit Theatre Parties call WAtkins 9-2050.

"Biggest and boldest drama of the year ★ ★ ★ ★."—*News.*
HERMAN SHUMLIN *presents*
The Children's Hour
A Play for Adults by LILLIAN HELLMAN
MAXINE ELLIOTT'S THEATRE WEST 39th STREET
Evenings 8:30—50c to $3. Matinees Wed. and Sat. 2:40—50c to $2.

SCOTT NEARING
Just returned from Europe
will lecture on
ITALY, GERMANY AND RUSSIA TODAY
Monday, Dec. 3, 8:15 P.M. Admission $1, 50c and 25c
Fifth Avenue Theatre, 28th Street and Broadway
Tickets at the Door or from
ROXANNA WELLS LECTURE BUREAU, 393 Seventh Avenue
Tel. CHickering 4-5344

3 LECTURES BY
GEORGE SOULE
Editor, "The New Republic"; author "The Coming American Revolution," etc.
at the Community Church Center, 550 West 110th St.
Tuesday evenings—8:15 o'clock Adm.: 25c to each lecture
Dec. 4—"The Pattern of Revolution."
Dec. 11—Revolutionary Signs in the U. S."
Dec. 18—"A Forecast of the Outcome."

□ JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH says □

BRITTLE HEAVEN. Vanderbilt Theater. Delightful performance by Dorothy Gish as Emily Dickinson.

D'OYLY CARTE OPERA COMPANY. Gilbert and Sullivan Operas. Martin Beck Theater. English company in the best performances of the familiar operas that you are likely ever to see.

L'AIGLON. Broadhurst Theater. Eva LeGallienne and Ethel Barrymore in an excellent production of Rostand's museum piece.

LIFE BEGINS AT 8:40. Winter Garden. A lively, talented, amusing show with several sketches above the average. The best of them is "Chin Up," which makes an English gentleman out of Bert Lahr. M.M.

MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG. Music Box. Ingenious, smooth, witty but rather mechanical drama about the youth of various successful men who meant when they were young to do really important things. Reveals the authors, Moss Hart and George Kaufman, in a mood rather more serious than usual.

THE FARMER TAKES A WIFE. Forty-Sixth St. Theater. Marc Connelly helps make a delightful play about life on the old Erie Canal. It's colorful, picturesque and amusing.

WITHIN THE GATES. National Theater. Sean O'Casey's modern miracle play with Lillian Gish. Received with rapturous applause to which mine was not added.

to the actors who wear them. As for the acting, it is not nearly so painful as the newspaper accounts had led one to believe. Pierre Renoir, in as thankless a role as any actor ever had, does not, it is true, succeed in making Charles Bovary any more interesting or acceptable than he was in the novel. The intrusting of the important role of Homais to that scarred veteran of the boulevards, Max Dearly, was quite definitely a mistake. But Valentine Tessier, it may be said, does correspond remarkably well to the image of Emma that exists in our imagination. Her Emma is, to be sure, a sometimes absurdly theatrical sort of person. But so also was the heroine of Flaubert's novel; and here perhaps we strike the essential difficulty in any effort to put her on the stage or screen. The whole point about Emma Bovary is that she was someone who confused life with the theater, living with acting. To present only the outward movements and actions of her career, therefore, is to give life at second remove—the theater imitating the theater. Her story becomes nothing more than a dramatic platitude about a country wife who has two lovers and comes to a bad end. What was necessary, of course, was that some equivalent be found for the elaborate texture of psychological fact with which Flaubert invested every slightest word and movement of his heroine. The lack of such an equivalent was most noticeable in the celebrated death scene, when the anointing by the priest of her eyes, her lips, her feet—"si rapides autrefois quand elle courait à l'assouvissance de ses désirs, et qui maintenant ne marcheraient plus"—recalls to Emma her whole past life. Such psychological equivalents are hard to achieve on the screen, but they can be achieved, and unless the effort is made, no screen rendition of a great work of fiction can be anything but the most lifeless skeleton of the original.

Although this column is disinclined to encourage the habit of repeating last year's musical comedies on the screen, it must be reported that "The Gay Divorcee" is very much better than most examples of its kind. The synchronization of sound with dance steps has improved to the extent that a first-rate dancing team like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers is just about as good on the screen as on the stage. It is to this pair rather than to anything else in the production, however, that the crowds pouring into the Music Hall these days are paying their homage; and the musical comedy as a form of screen entertainment remains as flatly unremunerative as ever.

WILLIAM TROY

Contributors to This Issue

CRISPIAN CORCORAN is the pseudonym of an American newspaperman long resident in China.

HAROLD J. LASKI, of the faculty of the University of London, is the author of many authoritative works on political science. "Democracy in Crisis" is his most recent book.

JOHN K. NORTON is professor of educational administration at Teachers' College, Columbia University.

MARK VAN DOREN, well-known as poet and critic, has recently completed a novel, "The Transients," to be published this winter.

HARRY ELMER BARNES, author of numerous books on sociology and history, is on the editorial staff of the Scripps-Howard newspapers.

LOUIS ADAMIC, born in Jugoslavia, has described his own visit to his native land after many years in America in "The Native's Return."

H. B. PARKES, an Englishman living in the United States, is a member of the History Department of New York University.

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